

THE
RUINE
AND
REPAIRE
OF
KINGDOMES.

Wherein is plainely shewed the causes why God sounds out his trumpet against us; With the meanes for the prevention of Ruine, and happy Reparation of this
distracted and tottering
KINGDOME.

In two Parts.

By DANIEL SWIFT, an unworthy
Minister of the Gospell.

*Righteousnesse exalteth a Nation: but sin is a reproach
unto any people. Prov. 14. 34.*

*Non solum donis reficit, sed etiam flagellis erudit. Gre-
gor. in Ezech. hom. 19.*

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TO THE
HONORABLE,
RIGHT WORTHY,
AND
RELIGIOUS,
THE
House of Commons,
now Assembled in
PARLIAMENT.

*Honorable and Right
Worthy Senators,*



He Subject of this
Booke being na-
tionall, and You
the representative
body of this Kingdome, it
seeks to shroud it selfe under

The Epistle Dedicatory.

the wing of your Honours
Protection : It feares not the
Light, it is the Truth : It cares
not for Carpers, dogges will
barke at strangers; it desires
but onely your favourable a-
spect, and that it may be ac-
cepted amongst the Saints. If
it be Satyricall, it is onely to
the enemies of Zion; I am
sure it is directive, and I hope
it will prove consolatory to
all that wish well to our *Hie-
rusalem*. For publishing it, I
may looke for censures. I am
willing to undergoe what
God shall permit, for my
conscience beares me record,
that it is God, not my selfe
that I seeke, and the repairing
& replantation of this King-
dome that I thirst for. If I be
not mistaken, now is the time,
that

The Epistle Dedicatory.

that the Heathen rage, that the Kings of the Earth set themselves, and that the Rulers take counsell against the Lord, and against his anointed; Doe they not say, *Let us breake their bonds asunder, and cast away their cords from us?* but as hee that sitteth in Heaven laugheth them to scorne, so your Honours, his sanctified ones, his mighty ones, that rejoyce in his highnesse, hath hee gathered together as his forces against them: Fight valiantly, stand out courageously, the cause is Gods, that you contend for, and his Banner over you is his Love. Feare not I beseech you, any adverse powers. There are more with you then against you: The Lord is for you,

A 3 you

The Epistle Dedicatory.

you need not matter what a thousand can doe unto you. *Abithophels* counsell shall be turned to folly. *Rabshakehs* rayling shal be put to silence, and *Hamans* project against the children of the Kingdom shal make for his own ruine; Christ is but behind the myrtles, he is already upon his red, or as *Junius* reads it, upon his fiery-coloured horse; He intends to helpe you, to fight your battels, to give you the victory, and to powre out before you the blood of his Churches opposers. I know your Honours cannot but see how our Kingdome totters, and how our Nation is in a decaying condition. You are builders together with God; Therefore search out every rotten

Zach. i. 8.
Super equeum rufum. s. coloris ignei, quo predest eccles. & confumit adversarios. Lun. in locum.
Per hoc designatur vinajilla divina de adversariis Iudaorum per colorem sanguineum. Lyra in locum.

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rotten post, and pull them downe, I meane every treacherous spirit, that endangers our edifice, and put up sound timber, such, as by the due and faithfull execution of wholesome Lawes will advance Gods glory in the suppression and depression of all impiety.

I perswade my selfe that *Zions* sorrowes are a daily object to your Honours eye: the teares run down her cheekes: shee is as a Lilly amongst thornes. She is in great bitterness, and heaviness possesseth her soule. For her adversaries are the Chiefe, her enemies prosper, and they mocke at her Sabbaths. Her Virgins are afflicted: The wicked have cropt the boughes,

Qui a pradihi coloris equum conscendere visus est, venditam sanguinis in eam gentem significat afferendam, qua populum Israel in captivitatem redegerat. Hieron. Prolog. in Zachar.

The Epistle Dedicatory.

boughes, and cut downe her branches, by withstanding and opposing the power of godlinesse. Her Priests sigh: the cleare & crystall streames of the Sanctuary, through erroneous doctrines, and superstitious vanities, are growne muddy, by the foule feete of the Romish faction. Shee mournes continually: For many of her Pastors are dumb and cannot speake comfortably to her, and others are prophane, and by their lewd and vicious courses, endanger the further corrupting of her. Your Honours I hope are, and desire to be Gardiners, Planters, and Vinedressers for the Lord. Be perswaded then to plucke up the thornes, they lacerate the Lillies: To take
away

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away the Foxes, they destroy
the Vines: To fell downe
the tall, the spreading, and the
sucking Ashes, they extract
too much humidity from the
soyle, and by overtopping
hinder the growth of the ten-
der Plants: And to stub up
the old and decayed roote,
dumbe dogges and prophane
seers, that way may be made
for more fertill trees. Thus
doing, you shall honour the
Lord, repaire our Kingdome,
replant our Church, and bring
comfort to your owne soules.
The Lord knit your hearts
like *Davids* and *Jonathans* to-
gether, and grant that you
may be all zealous for him-
selfe, loyall to our Sovereigne,
and faithfull to your Coun-
try. That the Gospell may
flourish,

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flourish, Christians may be
encouraged, and wickedness
may daily more and more be
supplanted in this our Nati-
on. So prayeth he, who rests
ever

Your Honours

humbly devoted,

DANIEL SWIFT.

To



To the Reader.

Studious diligence without writing and conference, is the dull picture of Harpocrates the God of silence; Secretariship without studious diligence in reading and digesting conference, is the picture of jangling Therlites, as lavish in tongue as Battus, speaking words for the most part without weight. But in this Treatise (good Reader) thou hast neither the picture of the one, nor the other; thou hast neither matter without words, nor words without matter, out of measure, or without weight.

The Writers memory burdened with private study, is now unloaded for a publique use; his good and wise communication amongst others, hath lent his tongue a smooth Delivery, and now his Secretariship yeelds the Stationer the sale, Thee the perusall, both of you the profit of his paines.

The occasion of the first part, was the
much

To the Reader.

much to be feared, many waies threatened
every way deserved destruction of Eng-
land; the occasion of the second, is the
much to be hoped, many wayes promised,
though no way deserved restitution of
England. Herein the Author is a true
time-server, I wish all had bene of this
Kinde; then the times would have ser-
ved better for a Christians conversation.
It may be thou wilt desire to have thine
eare tickled, rather than thine heart pier-
ced; But then thou lovest thy desire, for
this is not the Authors aime. Rhetor-
icall colours, and airy Ambages, I
dare not promise thee: Yet for this I will
engage my credit, viz. that in both Trea-
tises thou hast the Axe laid to the roote
of the tree, viz. the Word of God pressed
home and thoroughly applyed to the con-
sciences of men, for the cutting downe sin
in their mortall bodies, and for the sa-
ving of their Soules. And whereas ma-
ny say, that the Printers Presse is op-
pressed with English Sermons; I answer
that 'tis true, there are Sermons indeed a-
broad published by some enough, nay more
then enough. But yet not enough, I dare
say, of such as this is, wherein the Text
(correspondent to the times in regard of
sinne

To the Reader.

sin ordinary, in points of practice necessary) is dealt with so publicly, and pressed home so powerfully, that, I hope, it will not be read of thee (if well considered) ineffectually; wherein Learning and Piety, method and matter so concur, that if it please not any, they are those alone, whose prophane Palats can relish nothing that savoureth of grace, though never so delightfull otherwise; If it profit not any, it is to be feared, they are such, whose corrupt consciences are growne almost irrecoverable, if not wholly incurable.

Many graceles, godles (though deep-witted) men, in the processe of time have sayled by the earbly windes of their own Braine and Studyes, and so have falne into, and been drowned in the sea of perdition, the profound sea of divine Scripture, as it is deputed in the shewing of mercy to the Lambes of the fold, who may wade therein to the profit, both of themselves and others, so also it is design'd for the shewing of Justice, in suffering proud Elephants, both to drowne themselves and others also: who then, O Lord, shall know thy meaning, unlesse thou give him understanding and wisdom, and send thy holy Spirit from on high? Let every
man

To the Reader.

man therefore in reading the Scripture, labour for an understanding exercise in humility, and a life still proceeding in Piety: For goodnesse of life and purity of the soule, and Christian Piety, is necessary for the search and true science of the Scriptures: and without this purity of minde, and a life which followeth the steps of sanctity, a man shall mistake many times, and fall out to be one of them, of whom Saint Paul saith, that taking upon them to teach the Law, they understand not that whereof they speak, and so not only run themselves, but draw others into grosse errors, nay and punish those that will not erre with them, as many of Gods dearest Saints, and best Servants have (of late yeares) found by wofull experience.

1 Tim. 1. 7.

Rom. 3. 28.

But let that passe, All things have, and as yet doe worke together for their good. They gaine more oft times by that vinegar and gall the devill gives them by his instruments, then by the honey of Devotion, which they themselves desired; yet weele give God thanks for it, not the Devill: For it was his intent to make chaines for those that love God, not Crowns. And although the Devill as

To the Reader.

it were makes a jest of tempting, and his agents of tyrannicall insulting over Gods servants: yet its God Almighty indeed, that makes a jest both of him and them, because he draweth good to his children out of his temptation, and their tyranny. And whilst he as well as his instruments thinke they doe veruious men most harme, its then veruious men reape most good; whereat as hee may be much confounded, so they may be much asbamed.

But I forget my selfe, I am loath to be long where the worke is short. This litle be spoken rather for Information, then for commendation of the worke, which in the reading, to any ingenious, judicious, and religious heart will sufficiently commend it selfe.

What remaines therefore, but that I (wishing the accomplishment of the Authours end, viz. Gods glory and thy good) leave the worke to thy perusall, and his Blessing, who gave the Authour his endowments, and us freely all things we doe injoy, and rest

Thine in Christ,

Hen. By.



The generall Heads of the ensuing Discourse.

Part. I.

That God threatens before he strike. Fol. 9

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That God many times threatneth to plucke up,
to pull downe, and to destroy whole Nati-
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are builded and planted by the Lord. 223

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replantation of Kingdomes upon an instant,
so upon an instant he doth effect the same. 240



THE
RVINE
AND
REPAIRE
OF
KINGDOMES.

Part. I.

Jer. 18. 7, 8, 9. *At what instant I shall
speake concerning a Nation, and con-
cerning a Kingdome, to plucke up,
and to pull downe, and to destroy, &c.*

Hough infinite mercy will
never be conquered, and
endlesse goodnesse never
admits of bonds; yea
though it rejoyce against Justice;
B James

*Bonus viri
non vincitur, &
infusa mis-
ericordia non sub-
iungitur, Fulgent.*

Justice pleading
against man,
but Mercy for
man.

Micah 7. 28.

Esay 58. 31.

James 2. 3. Yet notwithstanding, where sinne, like water, runnes with an overflowing streame, judgement will take place; indeede hee is a boundlesse Ocean, flowing with compassion, yet he doth not overflow; for he is just as well as mercifull; therefore well said *Bernard*, *Mercy* and *Truth* are the two feete of God, by which he walketh in all his wayes; as his *Mercy* is a just Mercy, so his *Justice* is a mercifull Justice; Justice moves him to threaten, Mercy desires forbearance; at the plea of Justice, he doth menace; but at the request of Mercy, hee doth it to draw them to repentance; his intention is not to ruine them, but to spare them, not to destroy them, but upon their remission, to repent of the evill denounced against them. Mercy pleaseth him, saith *Micah*, but Justice is his strange work, saith the Prophet *Isaiah*. He bestows his blessing every day; he denounces Judgement but now & then, sparingly, and after a long time of forbearance; that at the last when kindnesse will not prevaile, by them, hee may bring

bring them to remorse of conscience; Will not a man that would gladly open a doore, trie key after key, untill he hath tried every key in the bunch? our hearts are by nature fast lockt up against the Lord, and the sweete gracious and healing Motions of his blessed Spirit; for we so love our sinnes as that wee neglect our soules; slighting, yea opposing his loving invitations unto holinesse, and his wholesome admonitions against prophanesse, in these God knocks and raps at the gate of our soules, & for closing with his sacred commands, he is content to wait untill his head be filled with dew, and his locks with the drops of the night; but when he sees that we are so unkind, so void of humanity (I should have said of grace) as yet to let him stand, not comming forth to give him an answer, that he may speake with us, and speake effectually to our soules, hee tries his last Key, the Key of his Justice, and with that breakes in and enters forcibly upon our spirits: Oh the goodnesse of our God, that thus

Opus Dei est animal quia creatur colligere, ad aeterna lucra gaudia revocare: flagellari autem, atque spiritus illius, crucifigi, mori, atque sepeliri non hoc in sua substantia opus Dei est, sed opus hominis peccatoris, qui hac omnia meritis per peccatum, Greg. lib. 2. in Ezech. Hom. 16.

God tries all meanes to doe us good.

Deus voluit punire ipsi extinguentur ut revertant. Salvian de providentia lib. 1.

desires our happinesse, and seekes to doe good unto us, and that against our wills: no marvell, if God to turne us from Evill, be forced to pronounce Evill; setting the Evill of punishment against the Evill of our sinnes; for as he sees our sinnes are our *Dalilaes*, so he beholds the stoutnesse and sturdinesse of our stomackes, like unto ward servants; feare must keepe us in awe; gentle usage will not make us buckle: were we of tractable dispositions, God should not neede by his comminations to shew us what will befall us, if we continue in our wicked courses, to breake us off from affecting our sinfull wayes; his *Mandates* declaring what is required of us, and his Reprehensions shewing what Evill is committed, and what duties are omitted by us, would be sufficient to put us upon holinesse, and to alienate our soules from perversenesse. But you know that wholesome precepts with mild speeches are not alwayes prevalent with rebellious natures; it is a Rod, not a Word that sometimes makes an obedi-

obedient childe : therefore now, seeing that the cords of men, and the bands of love are not attractives to our desire, in stead of smiling he begins to frown; and whereas before he used lenity towards us, now like a Vine-dresser hee begins to loppe us, lest we grow too wilde, like a Pedagogue to discipline us, lest we waxe too rude, yea to threaten us, and to exercise severity amongst us, lest we should adde sinne to sinne, and iniquity to our transgression : Thus, thus beloved doth God deale with *Israel*, hee hath exhorted her to amendment with sweete allurements, *Ier. 3. 13, 14, 15.* but this hath done no good, he hath reprov'd her, and that sharply, *Ier. 7. 9, 10, 11.* but his reproofes have beene as water spilt upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up : now the importunitie of her sinne is such, that it seemes to say to God, as *Iacob* said to the Angel, I will not leave thee untill thou hast punished this people : Concerning God punishing, I may say, as *Seneca* said of *Augustus*, It is a grievous punishment to him to

B 5

punish

Abque tribulatione sumus sicut vitis non ligata, & juvenis sine disciplina. Greg.

Exacerbamus Deum impuritatibus nostris, & ad puniendos nos trahimus inviti, cumque ejus natura sit mens Dei, argue majestas, ut nulla iracundia passione moderatur, tanta tamen nobis peccatorum exacerbatio est, ut per nos cogatur irasci, vim, ut ita dixerim, pietatis sue facinus, ac minus quoddammodo afferimus misericordiam suam : Cumque ejus benignitas sit, ut velit nobis jugiter parcere, cogitur malis nostris, scelera quae admittimus vindicare. Salvian. lib. 3. de gubernat. Dei.

God doeth not
willingly threa-
ten.

punish others; yea, the Lord would not so much as threaten; all his threatnings are forced and wrested from him; and therefore when hee goes to denounce Evill, it comes with Ah, and Alas, *Esay* 1. 24. Indeed he is a tender Father, whose bowells are rolled and turned within him; and would sinne but let him alone, he would never become an angry Judge to take revenge where he was wont to cherish. But now there is no remedy, *Israel* is growne so obstinate in sinne, that God must needs expresse his anger against her sinne: but yet see his earnest desires for her speedy conversion, and by consequence, for her future preservation: hee doth not hang out his red and blacke Flagge, portending the effusion of blood and death to all her inhabitants; but his white flagge, tending reconciliation upon her submission: he doth not come with a peremptory and an absolute decree against them, but with a conditionall commination, that as they may apprehend him to be displeased, so they may yet conceive

ceive that there is hope that he will againe be reconciled to their Soules; for let but them repent, and God will pardon them, bee their sinnes never so many for multitude, yea never so haynous for quality and Magnitude, for repentance is alwayes blest with forgivenessse. This we have not only implicitly, but expressly set downe in these seventh and eighth verses of this eighteenth chapter of *Ieremiah*; in this 7. verse you have a dreadfull, though a conditionall, threatning of a fearefull and a grievous judgement: the words divide themselves into these parts.

1. God
threat-
ning.

1. { A whole Na-
tion, that is,
a people ha-
ving their
beginning
where they
dwell.

At what in-
stant I shall
speak con-
cerning a
Nation,
on concer-
ning a
Kingdome
to plucke
up, to pull
downe, or
to destroy
it.

2. God
threat-
ning.

1. { A whole
Kingdome,
viz. a whole
Realme, or
a whole
Dominion.

3. The fearefulnesse of the
Judgement, set forth by
three Metaphors,

{ To pluck up,
{ To pull downe,
{ To destroy.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

God threatens before he strikes.

GOD comes not like a coward striking upon every advantage; he is a man of warre, and his Name is *Iehovah*, *Exod. 15.3.* hee first proclaimes his quarrell before he avenges himselfe.

He first gives warning before such time as he gives the blow: like a mercifull Creditor, he sends not his *Capias*, but his *Caveat*, that his Debter before the arrest, may compound and come to agreement. Thus hee sent *Noah* that Preacher of righteousness to the old World, *1 Per. 2.5.* that it might know how he was grieved at the very heart, with their iniquities, and what his purpose was concerning the future execution of vengeance upon them, and all this was before the windows of Heaven were opened, and the inundation of waters fell upō it, *Gen. 6.3, 4, 7.* Thus was *Lot* Gods Messenger to forewarn *Sodome* & her treacherous Sisters of
Envie

Goh

Envie before such time as fire and
brimstone came downe from Hea-
ven for their destruction, *Gen. 19. 14.*
Yea, thus also did many Prophets
goe forth from before him, before
the downe-fall of that famous City
of *Hierusalem*, *2 Chron. 36. 15, 16.*

Reason 1.

God is unwilling to execute
judgement, if other meanes would
serve the turne; hee will worke all
other wayes, a stone shall not be left
unturned over by him; if thereby he
can doe us good; hee is loath to
damne us, hee would gladly save
us: Affectionate and indulgent Pa-
rents seeing their children to doe
amisse, first, gently will admonish
them, then threaten them, before
they take the rod for to whippe
them; they will expostulate the case
with them to shew them their er-
rors; they will not beate them if
they apprehend any other meanes
likely to worke upon them: thus it
is with God, hee doth not willingly
afflict the children of men, his pro-
per and his genuine worke is to ex-
presse compassion, therefore he de-
lights not in our wounds; it is no
pleasure

Lam. 3. 33.
Deus est propiti-
us est misericors,
non se ad iram d-
sumus in iram d-
derunt, cum cogi-
mus. Bern. in
Cant.

pleasure to him to see the blood to
runne downe our backes. This is
grievous, for in all our afflictions he
is afflicted; hee had rather pardon
iniquity, and forgive transgression,
than come upon a people with de-
solation; hee will by no meanes
finite us, unless the cry of our sins
force him to lay strokes upon us:
Mercy comes naturally from him
like honey from the Bee; but Justice
like the sting, onely when he is pro-
voked. O how did the Lord expo-
stulate with *Kaine*, and labour with
him to bring him to the sight of his
sinne before he would lay his curse
upon him, *Gen. 4. 6, 7.* as first, *why*
art thou wroth? then, *why is thy coun-*
tenance false? Neither doth he here
leave him; but he proffers him fa-
vour, *If thou dost well, shalt thou not be*
rewarded? but alas, his understanding
is darkened, hee yet considers not:
God now goes another way to
worke, telling him of his misery:
Thou hast done evill, sinne or punishment
lies at thy doore; but all this doth not
worke upon his adamantine heart;
God is even constrained to make
him

*Involuntarius in tota
vindicta si res in-
dulgenciam mis-
erantis non con-
temnit. Aug.
Serm. 3. de verb.
Dom.*

him a Vagabond upon the face of the earth : Oh *Caine, Caine*, why art thou thus stupid & will nothing worke upon thee? thou couldest quickly discerne the acceptation of thy brothers Sacrifice ; but thou canst not see thine owne heart, imbrowed in thy brothers blood ; though the Lord would have thee to see, that seeing it, thou mightest speake to him for remission. Admirable were those warning peales that were rung by our Saviour Christ in the eares of *Judas*, before he attempted the Treason against him : first, he washes the feete of the Traytor, even those feete that were ready forth-with to runne to spill his innocent blood : O *Judas*, how is it possible thou shouldest harbour such a mischievous conceit against him ; who so humbly (though thy Master) is ready to doe thee service? Secondly, upon washing occasionally he tells them, *They are cleane, but not all* ; Now hee might have considered his speech a little, and enquired after the pollution of his owne soule, saying, We are all washed

Ioh. 13. 2. 5.

Ioh. 13. 10. 11.

washed, but yet some body amongst us is not clean; I have thought upon a wicked exploit against him, and therefore surely it is I; But alas, *Iudas* is yet senselesse. Therefore, thirdly, Christ comes a little nearer him, telling them, *That one of them should betray him*: the rest of the Disciples are troubled at this word, doubting of whom he should speake it, every one being ready to say, *Is it I?* onely *Iudas* is still asleepe; after all this hee threatens him, saying, *Woe be to that man by whom the Son of man shall be betrayed*, *Mat. 26. 24.* but all this while *Iudas*, like *Jonah* lies fast in the hatches of his owne corruption: O *Iudas* wert thou but asleepe, surely thou wouldst awake, having so many calls one upon the necke of another; wert thou not in a dead sleepe, either the still voyce of Mercy would raise thee, or the thunder-claps of Judgement affright thee. Thus you see how Christ, one while would woe him, another while how he seekes to terrifie him, but yet *Iudas* will on to his Treason, and so haste to his perdition.

Ioh. 13. 18.
Vnus ex vobis,
et. unus numerus
non meritis, com-
mixtione corporali
non vinculo spiri-
tuali, carnis ad-
junctione non cor-
dis socius unitus,
Augustin in locum.

Auguſt. lib. 2. de
ciuitate Dei.
cap. 3.

Luke 19. 41. 42.
Chriſtus in pona
inſorenda iardus
eſt, & illam la-
chrymis mananti-
bus pronuntiat, &
quaſi coactus in-
gerit. Stella in
locum.

Confirmat hic lo-
cus Deum inui-
zum accedere ad
ulſionem, niſi
quatenus id eius
juſtiſſa poſtulat,
ut impoſſentia-
ribus penas inſli-
gat. Toſſan.

tion. All this ſhewes how loath
God is to proceede in the way of
his Judgements. The Phyſicians
weeping over his Patient when hee
will not take his potions preſcribed
for his health; argues the deſire of
his life, but unwillingneſſe for his
death. I read of *Marcus Marcellus*,
that he wept before the Enemies of
Syracufa, and ſhed his owne teares,
before he ſhed the blood of the in-
habitants thereof. I am ſure Chriſt
did thus; for when hee drew neare
unto the City of *Ieruſalem*, He wept
over it, he was unwilling to bring
upon her the deſerved puniſhment
of her rebellion, her ſinnes muſt
mightily provoke him before hee
will entertaine thoughts of her de-
ſtruction. And when there is no
way, but Juſtice muſt have her
courſe, it fetches teares from his
Eyes to give way unto it: ſuch is the
mercy of our gracious God, that
when ſinne cries loud, and Judge-
ment pleades for execution, it ſup-
plicates on our behalves, and ten-
ders it ſelfe as a ſurety for our
ſoules: and ſhe no ſooner appears
but

but God listens for her plea, and is attentive to what she saith: yea, he is as willing to forbear, as shee to entreate forbearance: This appears by Gods answer to the suite of Mercy in the behalfe of *Ephraim*, when sentence was passed upon her, and she ready forthwith to goe to her execution: Because she would not returne, Justice pleaded that the *Assyrian* might be her ruine, That the sword might abide in her Cities, consume her branches, and devour her because of her counsells; and it was so decreed against her, *Hof. 11. 5, 6.* and it had gone not better with her, had not Mercy stept in for to speake for her: Now Mercy hath no sooner presented her petition, & put up her request, but God condescends, and yeelds unto the same, and in reply to Mercy, he directs his speech to *Ephraim*, and that with expressions of indeered and fatherly affections, saying, *How shall I give thee up Ephraim, How shall I deliver thee Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled*

Hofea 11. 8. 9.

*Cumque durum,
irato crudelium
fontentiam proxi-
miffet, rursus pa-
tens affectu
misericordia vi-
cesur, & aulie-
ritatem iudicis
mitigat prope
parris. Hieron. in
locum.*

kindled together; I will not execute the
fiercenesse of my wrath! Mercy is so
futable to the native propension of
his loving kindnesse, that hee hath
no minde to set upon the Acts of
Justice. Men that desire to doe
good to others, being frustrate in
their purposes, and crost in their af-
fectionate endeavours, you shall
heare them mourne many times un-
to themselves, and wish to their
friends that they could have ac-
complished their desiderate inten-
tions: So the Lord, according to
his oath, *Ezek. 33. 11.* not Tyrant-
like, delighting in slaughter, and
setting Crueltie in the place of Ju-
stice; but Friend-like and Father-
like desires their conversions, not the
destruction of our soules; yea when
he sees that we will not be ordered,
but like unrained Heifers not accu-
stomed to the yoke, enforce him to
lay blowes upon us, then as sending
out a deepe sigh, hee breakes out
into this or the like wish: *O that my
people had hearkened unto me, and Israel
had walked in my wayes, I should soone
have subdued their Enemies, and turned*

my hand against my adversaries, Psal.

81. 13, 14. Then may wee not from this his dealing deduct this conclusion, That gracious is the Lord, and righteous, yea our God is mercifull? Psal. 116. 5, 6.

By menacing before hee execute vengeance upon us: hee expresth his patience, with his long forbearance for our repentance; by him we live, though wee live to grieve him: our actions are sustained by him, though they be done against him: wee are supported by his arme and strength, though we use that arme and strength to wound him: yet such is his gracious disposition, that though he be forced to threaten, yet hee would have the time of his threatning, the time of our repenting; he will not lash us, if the shaking of the rod will but amend us. Mens mercies if they be provoked, are quickly turned into furies; so soone as ever the occasion is given, wrath and rage appears in their very faces, and forthwith in tyranny they proceed to blowes. But the Lord is God, and not man;

C

hee

*Bi misericordiam
posuit, semel ju-
stissimam, Ambros.*

Reason 2.

*Calamitas pradi-
catur ventura, ut
agente populo pe-
nitentiam non ve-
niat, qua ventu-
ra est, si permane-
ris in delictis,
Hieron. in Joel
1.*

hee can longer hold his peace, be still, and refraine himselfe, still sparing when he may justly strike, and shewing compassion when hee might powre out his indignation upon our soules. Man naturally is asleepe, nay dead and buried in the grave of sinne: God doth not hereupon take advantage, and throw him into hell; but first to awake and raise him up, God sounds out the shrill trumpet of his justice against him, and even when the sword is drawne, and his hand lifted up, then hee suspends his stroakes. Neither is it any marvell, for he is abundant in mercy, *Ps. 103. 8.* Israel was commanded, that when she first laid siege unto a City, to offer conditions of peace; but if they would not be at peace with her, but stand out in battell against her, then to goe on, and smite every male with the edge of the sword. So when God comes against a people, hee sends his heralds before him, that they may know with what intention hee is comming against them, that if they will submit, hee may

Deut. 20. 10, 12, 13.

may then found a retreat, put up his arrowes, send backe his forces, and be a towre of defence unto their soules: but if they yeeld not, then they are to assure them, that their gates shall be fired, their palaces burned, their habitations ruined, & them selves slaughtered: nay, even when hee is come, and hath placed his Ordnance, with other warlike instruments close by the walls, hee yet forbears to give the fatall, and the dismall blow, pressing them by commination to a speedy prevention of their imminent destruction: hee is content, even then to give them space to turne them in, and time for consideration, but sometimes more, and sometimes lesse: to the old world hee gave an hundred and twenty yeares; to the men of Nineve forty dayes; scarce a day was given to *Belsazer*; and not a whole night to the foole in the Gospell: in the longest of these times wee see the greatnesse of his patience, and in the shortest of these seasons some forbearance.

By his comminations preceeding

Gen. 6. 3.
Jona 3. 4.
Dan. 5. 30.
Luk. 12. 20.

his executions, hee leaves the wicked without excuse, and shuts up their mouthes in silence, when hee makes them presidents of his wrath: the Masters warning takes away the boyes excuse for negligence when hee comes to whipping: should not God doe thus, they would be ready to cry out of injustice: that if beforehand they had knowne what misery would have fallen upon them, they would not have gone on in sinne, but have endeavoured their prevention by humiliation for sinne; therefore God, to leave them without any plea against him, or for themselves, breathes out threatnings against their soules: though hee suffer them to goe on in their owne wayes, yet hee hath a witnesse of his desire of their felicity, in that he doth good, and giveth raine with fruitfull seasons, filling their hearts with food, and gladnesse; and these his blessings shall preferre a bill of indictment at the barre of judgement against their soules: nay, should these hold their peace, and passe by with
silence

AG. 14. 16, 17.

silence, their owne consciences would put in a blacke bill: yea, which is something more, give in a heavier verdict against their soules, for even through it they shall be constrained to say, *Thou art iust in all that is brought upon us; for thou hast done right, but wee have done wickedly, Nehem. 9. 33.* For when the Lord testifies against a people by his spirit, in the mouthes of his Prophets, and they walke proudly, sinning against his judgments, when hee shall punish them, and punishing them, set them as pillars, and monuments of wrath for posterities to looke upon, they shall then speake against themselves; *wee have not hearkened to thy Commandements, nor yet to thy testimonies, wherewith thou didst evidence against us.* Thus Christ came, that the Jewes might have no cloake for their sinnes. A people standing at defiance with her adversary, when hee makes a tender and an offer of peace, may thanke her selfe, not so much blame her enemy, when shee sees that her streetes ru-

Nehemiah. 9. 29,
34.

downe with blood, God warnes us: God threatens us: God is coming in battell aray against us: let us prostrate our soules, and seeke his face, and that speedily too, for his present menaces will cut off all our excuses in the day of his wrath.

Reason 4.

Gen. 18. 17.
Amos 3. 7.

*Non facies Deus
verbum nisi reve-
la-verit Prophetis,
non quo omnia re-
velat Prophetis,
qua in caelo faci-
at, sed qua factu-
rus in terris sit.
Hier. in Amos 3.*

God menaceth before he wounds, out of a tender and an affectionate love unto his servants; for as hee will not hide any thing from *Abraham* his intimate friend, so hee will do nothing, but he revealeth his secrets to his servants the Prophets: Ministers are Gods privie Counsellers, hee will acquaint them with his intentions before hee will produce the acts of his justice: thus God dealt with *Noah*, that Preacher of righteousness, when he told him that the end of all flesh was come before him, that the earth was filled with violence, and that therefore hee would destroy it, *Gen. 6. 13.* Neither was the Lord sparing to reveale and disclose his purpose unto *Moses* concerning the freedom of *Israell* from her Egyptian bondage,

bondage, and the destruction of her enemies, in the way to, and in the land of Canaan, *Exod.* 3.8. Neither for their owne sakes only doth God manifest this his purpose to these his messengers; but that they declaring to his people what is made knowne to them, hearing the Word at his mouth, and giving them warning from him, they may seeke out for shelter for themselves against the day of wrath: For as God would have *Noah* for to ship himselfe in the Arke before the floud gates of heaven be pulled up: and *Lot* upon his way to Zoar, before such time as Sodome be set on fire; yea all his children to come out of Babylon, when her sinnes reacht to heaven, and hee remembring her iniquities, is determined to lay his sore and heauie plagues upon her: so it hath ever beene an usuall thing with God? faithfull ones in times of danger, to speake often one to another, and assembling themselves together, to provoke each other to love, and to good workes, by so much the more

Heb. 11. 7.

Gen. 19. 12, 13,
14. &c.

Agg. 18. 4, 5.

as they see the day approaching: neither doe they thus onely looke unto their owne wayes, repent of their owne sinnes, and supplicate God in their owne behalves: but they are even earnest suiters, and importunate beggers, when themselves have little cause to feare, for the preservation of others. Thus it was with *Moses*, when the glittering sword of dreadfull vengeance hung by a twine thread, I had almost said a haire, over the heads of the Israelites, the Lord tels him, that hee hath seene them to be stiffe-necked people, therefore hee chargeth him to let him alone, that is, not to hinder him in the way of his judgments, by his importunate prayer, that his wrath waxing hot against them, he might consume them: and the sooner, yea the better to move him to silence, hee promises safety to himselfe, by telling him hee will make him a great Nation; yet for all this *Moses* will not hold his peace; but expostulating the case with God, layes downe three strong and forcible arguments to move him

Exod. 32. 9, 10,
11, 12, 13, 14.

him to pity: the one drawne from the precedent acts of providence Thou hast brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, with great power and a mighty hand: the second is extracted from the subsequent calumnies, and blasphemous speeches of heathenish wretches after Israels ruine: Wherefore should the Egyptians say, for mischiefe did hee bring them out to slay them in the mountaines, and to consume them from the face of the earth? But the third is fetcht from Gods owne precedent covenant to their forefathers, and godly progenitors: Remember *Abraham*, and *Isaack*, and *Israel* thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine owne selfe, and saidst unto them, *I will multiply your seed as the starres of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of, will I give unto your seede, and they shall inherit it for ever.* Thus you see, though his owne person was free from perill, yet like *Jacob* hee wraistles strongly with the Angell, and preffeth hard upon God for mercy: yea which is more, hee

he breaks not off his request untill the Lord repent of the evill which hee thought to doe unto that his people; yea Gods love is such to his people, that he would not have them infected with the courses of this world: *Adams* antidote to prevent his eating of the forbidden fruit was a threatning: *In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt die the death.* Gods menaces are but as a fathers chidings, to scarre his children from their sinfull wayes: wee are naturally addicted to sinne; threatnings are but his thornie hedges to turne backe our headstrong and unruly affections.

Application.

First, if judgements come, and fury like fire take hold of our sinfull soules, wee may thanke our selves, imputing it to our owne folly, or rather wilfulnesse, and that wee would not be warned by the menaces of his justice: wee cannot accuse the Lord of hard dealing, but our owne obdurate spirits, that by threatnings would not be brought to relenting. Were he desirous of revenge, hee would
surprise

surprise us as his adversaries: But because hee warnes us before hee layes blowes upon us, hee would have us to prevent his stroakes by our timely repentance.

Secondly, let us observe his patience; when he might justly strike, hee can withhold his hand, keepe downe the fluicēs of wrath, and onely speakes sharply, annexing threatnings to his reproofes: hee knoweth our weaknesse, hee seeth our temper, and remembreth that wee are but dust, and therefore dealeth not with us after our sinnes, neither rewardeth us after our iniquities: it is not because he doth not see our sins, that he doth not punish our sinnes, nor because hee is not able, that hee doth not suddainly crush us in pieces; but because he would expresse his patience in waiting for our repentance. Thus all the day long did God stretch out his hand to Israel, a gain-saying, and rebellious people, *Rom. 10. 21.* And three whole yeares did he beare with the infertile fig-tree, before he would cut it downe, *Luk. 13. 7.* So that

Ps. 103. 10. 14.

*Non ille amisit
providentiam, non
amisit potentiam,
sed exerceat pati-
entiam, dum per-
nitentiam expe-
ctat tuam, Aug.*

that now wee may well subscribe to that which is spoken of him, *Exod. 34. 6. For he is the Lord, the Lord strong, mercifull, and gracious, slow to anger, abundant in goodnesse and truth.*

Thirdly, let us not thinke, when God sounds the trumpet of his justice against us, that he doth but dally with us; or that his threatnings are but scar-crowes: for as the people feare when the trumpet is blowne in the City: so if wee feare not, wee shall one day know him to be the Lord, when his wrath is put into execution, and his anger lies heaue upon our soules. If Israell dispise his Word, trust in oppression and perversnesse, and stay thereon, her iniquity shall be as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking commeth suddainly in an instant; and God will breake it as a potters vessell, with an irrecoverable breach, *Isa 30. 12, 13, 14.* God is not in jest when hee menaceth; if hee see that wee slight his words, hee will make us feeble his blowes:

blowes: his threatnings are certaine preliudiums, and forerunners of a gloomie and dreadfull day.

Fourthly, when we heare the dolefull sound, and dreadfull thunder-claps of diuine justice, ratling in our eares, let us not take the counsell of *Iobs* wife, *BlaspHEME God and die*; but rather get our selues into a right frame, that our soules may live. Seeing wee could not be brought to feare him for his mercies; let us with *David* be horrible afraid of his judgements. Filiall feare is the best, but ser vile is better than none at all: I wish wee were all as indeered children in our affections, but seeing it will not be, let us feare as ser vants, not as enemies withstand, and gainsay his threatnings.

But what shall I doe when I heare the Lord roare from heaven, that I may be secure from the direfull stroake of his reuenging hand?

First, looke seriously into the pure & perfect law of God, and by that search & try thy wayes, and according

Quest.

Answer.

What the soule
must doe to be
secured from the
stroake of Gods
revenging hand.

cording as thou findest thy selfe
lesse or more sinfull by it, passe a
sentence upon thine owne soule: for
*if we condemne our selves, wee shall not
be condemned with the world, 1 Cor.*
II. 31.

Secondly, goe thy way forth
and meete the Lord, and by selfe
accusations prevent his reading of
that large bill of inditement that
hee brings against thy soule. Oh
tell him that thou wert once alive
without the Law, but when the
Commandement came, sinne re-
vived and thou diedst, *Rom. 7. 9.* yea
let him know that sinne hath play-
ed the false Marchant, deluded thee
with counterfeit wares: nay which
is more a cruell, and a bloody ty-
rant, that it hath even shed thy
blood, murdered thee, and cut in
sunder the thred of thy spirituall
life; God will then pay thee,
commiserate thy case, strike at thy
sinne, not at thy soule: for if *Ephra-*
im smite upon his thigh, and be-
moane himselfe, though he was be-
fore as an untamed heifer, hee
shall forthwith be Gods pleasant
child

child, and there shall be bowels of compassion for him.

But I cannot thus complaine of sinne.

Object.

It may be thou art not so serious in thy thoughts of the judgements threatned as thou shouldst be, or at the least art too quicke in passing over it: for diddest thou dwell long enough upon it, it would leave a deepe impression in thy soule.

Answer.

It is true, moveable dispositions are not long affected with their troubles: but yet where the crosse comes close, and lyes heavie upon the soule, it cannot take off its eye, or by any meanes start from it; for the very affliction, is as a paire of fetters to keepe the heart from roving and running after other things.

It may be thou hast not desired the Lord to helpe thee *with sighs and groanes which cannot be uttered*, to expresse thy wants before him, *Rom. 8. 26.* Is it not God that teacheth us to profit by his menaces, and that leadeth us in the way that wee should goe? *Isa 48. 17.* God but holds thee off from complaining

plaining to let thee know that hee is the teacher of thy heart to grieve.

It may be thou labourest to bring two things together, which cannot concurre the one with the other: thou art willing to grieve for sinne, apprehending it an onely meanesto shroud, and shelter thy soule from wrath: but because it is a troublesome, and a dolorous, and an irksome taske, and cannot be wrought but by severing thy heart from pleasing delights, thou art loath God should take that course to worke griefe, which wholly crosseth thy naturall inclination.

Thirdly, when God threatens, take up the Prophets request in his penitentiall Psalm, saying, *O Lord rebuke mee not in thine anger, neither chasten mee in thy sore displeasure.* For prayer will turne away judgements, when nothing else can.

Object.

I feare God, having threatned mee, hee will not spare mee if I pray.

Answer.

Hast thou not Gods command,

Call

Call upon mee in the time of trouble, Psalm. 50. 15. and his promise for the acceptance of thy request: If my people pray, though I shut heaven that there be no raine, send the locust to devour their land, or cause the pestilence to rage amongst them; I will heare from heaven, forgive their sinne, and heale the land? And lastly, dost thou not know that Nineveh obtained mercy after that God had threatned to destroy her within forty dayes: therefore feare not, put thy selfe upon adventure. In warre men will hazard their lives, because they thinke some will escape, and why not they? and in traffique beyond the seas, many adventure great estates, because some grow rich by good returnes, though many miscarry; and what wilt not thou adventure to cast thy soule upon God, having so good a warrant as his command, and so great an encouragement as his promise? Imitate the Lepers, when they went to the Campe of Assyria, 2 King. 7. 4. and say thus with thy selfe, If I sit still under the load of my sinne,

D

this

*Quis pollicitus
serenti preventum,
naviganti portum,
militanti victori-
am, ideo navigan-
tes vitam ventis
credant, &c. Sal-
vian.*

this judgement threatned shall be inflicted: if I put my soule into the hands of God by prayer, if hee save it, it shall be saved; if hee save it not, it can but be destroyed. Nay surely he will not suffer it to perish; for I never knew him thrust any man from him, that cast himselfe upon him: but however, if I perish, I will goe to my God in the behalfe of my soule; if I be damned, I will be damned in his armes.

Quest.

But what shall I doe that my prayers may prevaile, for diverting of these fearefull judgements, which I see ready to fall upon mee?

Answer.

Put up thy prayers, not with a diffident, but with a beleeying heart: faith will perswade thy soule of the best that can come unto thee, not of the worst that may befall thee, and if thou pray in faith, hee heares thee. Pray fervently, fervent prayers are prevailing prayers; silence thy sinnes by the loud cry of thy prayers, and though they knocke hard for vengeance against thee, our knocke them, our cry them, for mercy to thy soule thus did, the
sweet

sweet finger of Israel, *Pf. 86. 3, 4, 5.*

Lastly, carry Christs righteousnesse, not thy owne demerits along with thy prayers: thus did *Paul* when he went to supplicate against the body of death, *Ro. 7. 24, 25.* For God will be so farrre from denying thee, or estranging himselfe from thee, that hee will preserve thee, and admit thee into a sweete communion with his Majestic, if hee once see thy robes washed, and made white in the blood of the Lambe, *Apocal. 7. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17.*

CAP. II.

God himselfe threatens.

THOUGH God be the fountaine of mercy, yet his mercies like the Ocean are mixed with the salt and brakish waters of divine justice; anger is not in him, as it is in man: Passion distinct from the essence: it is onely attributed to him by way of resemblance, to make us somewhat more distinctly to conceive of

How anger is in God.

Ira Dei non perurbationis est, sed iudicium quo irrogatur poena peccati. Prosper. 3

D 2

his

*Cum Deus irasce-
dicatur, non ejus
figuificatur por-
tur huius, qualis est
in animo irascen-
tis hominis: sed ab
humanis motibus
translato vocabulo,
vindicta ejus, qua
non nisi iuxta est,
ira nomen accepit.
Bed. in Eph. c. 1.*

Gods anger dif-
ferent towards
his owne, and
towards the wic-
ked.

his dealing with us: Gods anger denotes his dislike of sinne, and his resolution for the punishing of sinfull creatures, and thus his wrath is said to be revealed from heaven against all ungodlinesse, *Rom. 1. 18.* And this his dislike, nay his detestation of evill: he sometimes expresse by dreadfull comminations against our soules: yea, and sometimes also by the direfull execution of his fearfull judgements: for as divine wrath is divine vengeance; so the wicked through their impenitencies are said to *treasure up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgement of God, Rom. 2. 5.* God, I confesse, is sometimes angry with his dearest servants, for they are all by nature children of wrath as well as others, *Eph. 2. 3.* Yet his anger against them, is not like his anger against prophane wretches; Towards his own it is but momentary, at the worst, but temporary, for hee will not chide them for ever: *Psal. 103. 9.* but bring them forth to the light: *Mich. 7. 9.* towards the wicked

wicked it is eternall, for hee that be-
leeueth not, shall never see light, because
the wrath of God abideth upon him for
ever: *Ioh. 3. 36.* towards his owne
it is but mild; if hot, yet in mea-
sure, for as hee shelters them in the
stormes, so he makes way for their
escape, *1 Cor. 10. 30.* Towards
the reprobate it is vehement, yea
so violent, that they sinke under
the burthen of it, they are like the
stubble to the fire, and like a rui-
nous building before a strong tem-
pest: Towards his servants it be-
tokens good; for they are judged
here, that they may not be con-
demned hereafter, *1 Cor. 11. 32.*
but to the workers of iniquity it is
destruction, *Rom. 9. 22.* This in
God doth not imply any passion,
or perturbation; for hee is God
and therefore changeth not, *Malac:*
3. 6. By it wee are to conceive the
fiercenesse of his just justice, be-
ing kindled, and blowne up by
the bellowes of mans rebellions.

If a Master of a family be but in
a fury, the whole house is surpriz-
ed with feare: If a trumpet be

Exod. 15. 7.

but blowne in a City, the people are not in quiet: how terrible then is the voyce of God, which threatens desolation for our iniquities? Man doth not protest revenge unlesse hee be much wronged, and greatly moved: Neither doth hee, being a great person, tell his opposers of his irefull intentions: but rather letteth them, or causeth them to know his purpose by others; and if hee doe it himselfe, it implies much indignity, or at least some grievous provocation. Oh then, is not God highly incensed, when hee breakes forth into menaces; beating up his owne drumme for warre against this people? he speakes to them in his anger; they may well feare hee will *vexe them in his sore displeasure: Psal. 2. 5.*

Reason I.

It is time for God to speake, for his Prophets can have no audience. *Jeremiah* is in *Iudah*, and foretels a desolation equivalent to their rebellion: but the people will not beleeve him; nay, which is more, if hee come in the name of the Lord

Lord, yet they checke him, *Ierem.* 26. 9. and the censure of the Priests is, that for that Sermon he deserveth that death should be inflicted upon him. The good Prophet had noworse neighbours than they of his owne cloth: they that should have encouraged him, and laid hard unto the people for a reformation, combine themselves together against him, and cry out, as if his preaching were an intolerable burthen, and hence it was that hee put up a pittifull complaint to God against them, *Ierem.* 6. 10. Oh let it not be said of us, as it was sometimes said of this people, that God hath sent his messengers saying, O doe not this abominable thing, which I hate: and wee have not hearkened to turne from our wicked waies: *Ier.* 44. 4, 5. For if once his servants returne him an answer, that we stop our eares, regard not his ordinance, slight their message, and refuse the yoake of obedience, then God himselfe will come and speake, but his speeches shall be threats, and his threatnings shall presage our ruine.

Ier. 26. 11:

Against whom is it that every sinne is committed? if thou knowest not, let *David* teach thee *Psal.* 51. 4. *Ezra* informe thee, *Ezra* 9. 10. and the Prophet *Daniel* instruct thee, *Dan.* 9. 4, 5, 9. for in all their confessions I find that sinne is committed against the God of heavē, even this God who writes bitter things against whole nations: *Ioseph* subscribes to this truth, *Gen.* 39. 9. and the Prodigall makes publike acknowledgement of the same, *Luk.* 15. 18. For if the whole world should acquit and absolve us, if the Lord be not pacified, and his justice appeased, wee must undoubtedly expect his threatnings to lye hard against us. Can any thing be more directly against our neighbours than cousenage, theft, and robbery? yet that which makes them sinfull, is our disobedience in these to God, *Leviti.* 6. 2. Then surely if reason may but judge, she will tell us, it is but equity in God offended to threaten, yea and to punish also man offending his divine Majesty.

Sinne

Sinne is a slighting, and a contempt of God. In *Dauids* murder, and adultery, the Lord looks at his commands as neglected, and at himselfe as despised by him, 2 *Sam.* 12. 9, 10. Is there any thing taken more hainously amongst men, than contempt? the very displaieing of a man of worth is accounted unto him a great indignity offered, and many times stirres up abundance of ill blood in him; where ever evill is affected, and what ever the sinne is, whether covetousnesse, excessive drinking, or the pleasures of the world, God is slighted, hee hath not the chiefe seate in the heart: and hee will one day say to that soule, as hee did to *Ieroboam*, *Thou hast cast mee behind thy backe*, 1 *King.* 14. 9. Againe, is there any thing so contrary to the nature of God as sinne? is hee not the *Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Hosts?* *Isa.* 6. 3. Is hee not grieved, when wee walke contrary to him? *Eph.* 4. 30. & fretted with the multitude of our transgressions? *Eze.* 16. 43. Now if children doe these things which
their

their parents have, and doe set themselves against, shall not they be sure to heare from them: and and that not in mildnesse, but in anger; not in expressions of affection, but rather of indignation?

Reason 4.

When men commit their businesse unto others, it is often done to the halves: if it be in case of direction, it is not fully explained; if in case of displeasure, is not plainly unfolded. God sometimes refuseth to trust man with the publishing and promulgation of his intended justice: hee finds him partiall, not faithfull often in his cause: they were the Prophets that deluded Israel, and brought Hierusalem into the paradise of fooles, *Lament. 2. 14.* her teachers flattered her, and forbore to unfold the catalogue of her finnes before her; and no marvell, for they that prophesied of wine, and strong drinke, not crossing her in her vitious desires, were the most affected of her, *Micah. 2. 11.* it was pleasing matter that they did desire; and things delectable, that their soules longed to heare, *Isa. 30. 10.*

but

but woe to the pastors that measure not their hearers lines by the streight line of Gods justice: and woe to the people that are thus deluded, and take pleasure in being thus deceived: For they shall both be overtaken with wrath, and encompassed with the flames of the Lords displeasure. Surely God saw some of us to be such daubers, and some of you to be such hearers, and beholding so great corruption in us of the Clergie, and you of the Laity, hath lately threatned to shatter our Kingdome, yea to bring desolation and utter ruine upon this our Nation.

God doth not onely thus threaten himselfe, but he threatneth suddenly. Patience provoked is diverted into fury: and water-courses being stopped, if they breake out, runne with the greater violence; the currents of justice have long bene dammed up by mercy, sinne making a leake, the waters of judgement suddenly and violently breake out to the drowning of mens sinfull soules. As God is full of compassion,

on, the fire of his wrath may seeme to be dammed with the waters of pity, yet it is not quenched, for iniquity as fewell being put into it, ruine is menaced in an instant: the severity of his wrath may seeme to be covered, clouded, or eclipsed with his long forbearance; it is not extinguished, neither is yet so concealed, but if wickednesse be once ripened, he can menace sorrow and threaten misery in a moment.

Suddaine sounds make fearefull wakenings, but usuall sounds disquiet not: the cannon shot of the Law at first astonished, *Exod. 19. 16.* but the usuall impenitent hearer is not now astonished at the greatest thunder-claps of the same, if the Philistians come against Israel, and that upon an instant, with 30000 chariots, and 6000. horsemen, and people as sand on the sea shore, threatening direfull desolation, and dismall destruction unto her; she is then in such a strait, that she flees to the caves, & rocks for shelter, *Sam. 13. 5, 6, 7.* though *Belshazar* be attended by his Nobles, & accompa-

nied

nied with his concubines in the midst of his cups, and the height of his jollity, if upon the glance of his eye hee see the hand writing upon the wall against him, his countenance will change, and his knees smite one against another, *Dan. 5. 4, 5, 6.* When the wicked apprehend the arrowes of vengeance sharpened with the Lords displeasure, approaching neere unto them, O then they bethinke themselves how they may avoyd them, *Iob 22. 10.* for their sudden appearance addes to the sharpnesse & grievousnes of them. Continued, or continual chidings doe not cause the child to feare, it is his fathers sudden chiding that makes him tremble: the Lord, that hee may strike amazement, and produce astonishment, doth not alwayes speak harshly, but being angry he threatens suddenly.

The suddennesse of his threatening implyes the hainousnesse of mans rebellion, and the grievousnesse of Gods provocation, for the Lord is gracious of himselfe, pardoning iniquity, passing by transgressions,

gressions, and delighting in mercy, *Micah 7. 18.* untill wee kindle the coales of wrath with our impieties, wee see no perills, neither doe wee heare of any insuing dangers: when hee seeth that wee will not doe his worke, neglect our duties, and set our selves against him, then he forbeares not, hee begins to speake, not mildly, but roughly, determining bitter things against our soules: it is not a light, but a great passion that makes a patient master threaten his servant with ejection, neither doth his menacing so much denote his passion, as the wonderfull greatnesse of his provocation; the Master would willingly that hee did well, and walke faithfully in the discharging of his place, it is not the servant that is forced to offend, it is the Master that is forced to tell him, that hee will turne him out of doores for persisting in his fault.

Gods intention in his sudden threatning is a sudden, and a speedy reformation; witnesse Nineveh, who in the height of her pompe being arrested with this writ by *Jonah* Gods

Gods Sergeant from the high Court of heaven, *Jonah 3. 3, 4, 5, 10.* forthwith yeelds, yeelding considers, considering returns, and returning suddenly prevents the sudden judgement denounced aganst her. O happy threatening, but more happy because sudden, but most of all happy, because as sudden it produceth a sudden humiliation / monings will not still, and quiet peevisish and froward children, the nurse must start up from her seat, put forth her hand, and reach the rod before the child will cease to wrangle, it is not faire words, it is the shewing and chafing of the rod that stills the child.

Oh that all blasphemous speakers, filthy drunkards, irreligious, nay sacrilegious innovators, and carelessse Ministers would lay this to heart. Give mee leave a little to speake to these in particular: Thou wicked swearer who belchest one oath upon the necke of another, thinking it a badge of thy gentry to spit forth thy venome at the God of heaven, was it the law of the Egyptians

Application.

Egyptians, that the cōmon sweater should lose his head of the Scythians, that he should forfeit his goods, of the Grecians, that he should lose his eares, and of the Romans, that hee should be violently throwne down the rock *Tarpeius*; & wouldst thou have, or canst thou suppose that God will be silent, seeing thou doest so frequently teare the flesh of his Sonne, with thy teeth, so often call him to witnesse thy hellish prophanenesse, and bid him damne thee for thine abominable wickednesse? God is not such a one as thy selfe; hee will reprove thee, and set thy horrid oathes in order before thee; if thou reforme not, hee will rend thee in pieces, and none shall deliver thee, *Psalm. 50. 21, 22.* hee may a little while forbear thee, but hee will never acquit thee. Looke to thy selfe, his menaces are his Hue and cryes, they are already sent forth, if thou take not heed, they will quickly, yea suddenly overtake thee; there will be then no escaping, his curse will lay siege unto thy house,

house, untill it hath consumed the timber and the stones thereof, *Zach. 5. 3. 4.* O thou who goest on in thy drunken courses, devouring the Lords creatures, being a Canker to the State, and a Caterpillar to the Common-wealth; how canst thou be quiet? Looke into thy bosome, and tell mee what is there? Is there not a biting Serpent, or stinging Adder? And though they yet sleepe, they will by and by stirre and make thee feeble them to the misery and torture of thy poore soule: The foole in the Gospel thought as little of danger as thy selfe, when the next morning hee was sent to hell: Gods threatnings are his Sergeants, they will suddenly be upon thy backe; *Therefore awake thou drunkard, weepe and howle thou drinker of wine because of the new wine, for it shall be pulled from thy mouth, Isai. 65.* Hearken also thou who goest about to eclipse the light of the Word, to thrust out Gods Ordinance, and to establish superstitious vanities: Surely thou art one of Belials sons, *Romes Birds,*
E and

and the Devills Favourites. God bids thee promote his Truth, thou wouldst keepe it downe. The Lawes of our Nation are against Idolatry, but in *Dan* and *Beihel* wouldest thou set up *Iereboams* Calves. Gods people must have nothing to doe with thee, *Pro. 24. 22.* Thy calamity shall arise suddenly, and who knowes not that ruine and destruction shall come upon thee? I had almost forgot the wicked Pastor, but let me borrow a word with him: First, tell me, Oh thou that art not *Siddur*, in some sort able to watch, what strength, what skill hast thou to move the waters of *Bethesda* for the curing of the people? if they be not stirred, thy diseased flocke can never be healed. Doth not Christ say, *If the blind lead the blind, they both shall fall into the ditch, Math. 18. 14.* And will not the Lord call thee to a strict account for every soule that is under thy charge? *Eze. 33. 8.* Therefore get thee forth quickly, stand no longer as a Cypher onely filling up roome, give way to some other who is fit, wisely and religiously to
goe

goe in and out before thy people: and if thou never heardest the Lord threaten thee; heare, he now sounds out a Trumpet against thee, *Ezech.* 34. 2, 3. Thou who hast parts, neglecting the use of thy Talent, and not reflecting upon the woe be-
hinde thee for not preaching the Gospel, *1 Cor.* 9. 16. What dost thou thinke? Is it not of absolute necessity to unfold the Word in season and out of season? Doth not Faith come by hearing, and hearing by the Word preached? *Rom.* 10. 14. And where the Vision fayles, doe not the people perish, *Pro.* 29. 18. It may be thou think'st that seldome Preaching is sufficient, or that smooth teaching is the best way to keepe thy peoples affections; Nay, dost thou not suppose frequent and zealous preaching to be nurse of Schisme, and the motive of Faction? If thou be in the right, Christ and all his Apostles were deceived. Know this, whilst thou art thus lazy and defective in thy calling, thou dost but cherish *Babels* brats, and make way for irre-

ligion. Doe not shut the gate against them that would enter; for if thou dost, Christ hath sent out his woe against thee, *Matth. 23. 13.* Be zealous in your Ministry, suppress prophanesse by your pious conversations, do not bring coals to the fire of naughtinesse, saying, *Come, we will fetch wine, and fill our selves with strong drinke, to morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant, Esay 56. 12.* I beseech you for the Lords sake to be most faithfull; for the peoples sake to be more carefull; and for your owne sakes to be more conscionable, or else be assured, God will say suddenly, *Woe to the Pastors that destroy and scatter the sheepe of my pasture, Ier. 23. 1.* Men that resolve to punish and not to spare, will not speake untill they be fit to strike. When God threatens suddenly, hee intends to execute judgement speedily; for suddaine threatnings, are but brimdstones of his implacable wrath.

2. Seeing God himselfe threatens and sounds an alarme for the Warre: Then learne from hence, you

you my brethren of the Ministry, with the Prophet *Jeremiah*, To be full of the fury of the Lord, to be weary with holding in; poure it out upon the children abroad, and upon the assembly of the young men together, that the husband with the wife may be taken, and the aged with him that is full of dayes, *Ier. 6. 11.* You must not alwayes be *Barnabasses*, sonnes of Consolation, but sometimes *Boanerges*, sonnes of Thunder: Though you may speake comfortably to *Hierusalem*, and cry peace and safety to his people, *Esay 40. 1, 2* yet alwayes you must blow the Trumpet against that enemy, and stand in defiance against every sinne. But that you may not exceede your bounds in displaying the rigour and terrour of the Law, be not unmindfull of this caution, Whereas there may be some thirsting soules gaping for a drop of Mercy, shew Gods goodnesse to the penitent, as well as his Justice to the obstinate: Vinegar and Sugar agree together, sweete and soure make the best sawce. Threatnings with promises are

good antidotes against the poyson of sinne, and good preservatives to keepe the soule in a holy frame: Now for your encouragement by comminations to beat downe sinne; consider a little of these particulars.

First, if a good President be a good warrant, and if one set of the Capitaine put courage into the heart of the souldier, then why should you (transgression abounding) feare to threaten, seeing God himselfe for your example hath walk'd in this way before you? *At what instant I shall say, &c.*

Secondly, examine your Commission. Doth not the Lord bid you say, *Woe to the wicked, it shall be ill with him, Esay 3. 11.* And is it not you whom hee chargeth to cry aloud, and to lift up your voyces like Trumpets, that *Israel* may know her sinnes? *Esay 58. 1.* God bidding you to denounce judgement, you goe beyond your limits, if before the removall of iniquity you promise impunity to any whomsoever.

Thirdly, consider what you are;
Are

Are you not Gods Legates, 1 Cor. 5. 20. and are not comminations a part of your Ambassage? If any man preach any other Gospel unto you, than that ye have received, let him be accursed, Gal. 1. 9. But he that doth not lay the Axe to the roote of the tree, takes away from the words of the Booke, and exposeth himselfe to the curse of God, Apoc. 22. 18, 19. Are you not the Lords Winnowes to sever the Wheate from the Chaffe, to take away the precious from the vile? Ier. 15. 19. Are you not his husbandmen? 1 Cor. 3. 6. And must you not as well cut up the weedes, as cast pleasant and pleasing seede into the ground? And lastly, Are you not Gods builders or free Masons? 1 Cor. 3. 9. and love you a Trowell to lay on the Morter, and not a Hammer to strike downe the rubbish?

Fourthly, know this, that Corrasives will eate out dead flesh, when Cordialls will doe no good; strong Purgations will cleanse the body, when milder Physicke will not worke; and the Mallet and Wedge

will make the hard and knotty timber fit for service, when the Plane can take no hold. The Hand-writing upon the wall brings shakings upon secure *Belsazer*. And at *Pauls* Preaching of Judgement *Felix* trembled: *Acts* 24. 25. Was not *Peters* tart and terrible Sermon effectuell? He told them they had slaine the Lord of life, therefore, subject to wrath, and presently they cried out, *Men and Brethren, what shall we doe?* *Acts* 2. 36. 37.

Fifthly, you must give to every one their portion: And is not the whippe provided for the Horse, the bridle for the Asse, and a rod for the fooles back? *Prov.* 26. 3. Is it not the Spurre and the Switch that makes the Horse goe, and the bridle that keepes the Asse in the way? Then surely they are not *Verba*, but *Verbera*, not *Syrens* Songs, but downe-right blowes that must prevaile for the reformation of a wicked person.

3. You that are Hearers, doe not take it unkindely, if we threaten you when wee see you transgressing and pursuing

pursuing your sinnes with ardency of affection; we know the terrors of the Lord doe but perswade you to holinesse, *2 Cor. 5. 11.* Wee are commanded to rebuke you sharply and cuttingly, that you may be sound in the faith, *Ti. 1. 43.* Wee are Gods Watchmen; if wee give you not warning, and you die in your sinnes, your blood will God require at our hands, *Ezek. 3. 17, 18.* Would you have us to suffer sinne upon your soules? *Levit. 19. 17.* Or would you have us to hazard our owne salvation to sooth you in your sinfull pleasures? *Iude* tells us some must be saved with feare, *Iude, Verse 23.* And wee have Christ as a leading president, who in his teaching, denounced many woes against the *Jewes*, *Mat. 23. 13, 23, 33.* Doe not therefore brand us as Stygmaticall Libellers for speaking against your sinnes, wee invey not against your professing and practising the Truth of God, wee had much rather adde fuell to that fire, and powre oyle upon that flame, than any way goe about to extinguish the same. It is
your

your impietie onely that makes us menace; for were it not for your finnes, wee should not neede preach damnation to your soules.

4. Seeing the Lord threatens suddenly; I beseech you open your eares, eyes, and your hearts too, and that speedily, whensoever you heare any Judgement denounced against your soules: all that God requires of you is to heare, hearing to feare, and fearing to forsake your finnes. Though man speake, hee is the Lords mouth. It is Gods Will, not his owne, that hee doth declare. *Samuel* threatned *Ely*, yet he receiving it as from *Iehovah*, saith, *It is the Lord, let him doe as seemeth him good*, 1 Sam. 3. 18. Princes doe not publish their Decrees themselves, but their Heralds; Judges though they give out, they doe not serve the Writs in their owne persons, but their Under-sergeants: And you know there is as much credit given to them as to the King himselfe, was the Crier of the one, and the Judge the server of the other. He that obeyes not the just Proclamation

tion of his pious Soverain, is forthwith reputed as a contemner of regall authority, and he that observes not his summons, though it be by an inferiour Officer, shall presently have the Law proceede to a Writ of Rebellion: We menace our menaces, but our Lieges message; therefore heare, and feare, and lay with *Hezek. Good is the word of the Lord, 2 Kings 20. 19.* If you will not apply comminations, and admit of threatnings for the ransackings of your festred hearts; it will imply, first, that you do not desire to be rid of sinne, being more fearefull of the salve than the sore. Secondly, that you are altogether devoyd of grace; for they are bankrupts, who cannot endure that their bookes should be searched, and their estates ript up. Thirdly, that your wounds are festred, your consciences feared, and that your soules are given up to an obdurate sense; for where the playster makes not the sore smart, the dead flesh is not gone. Lastly, that you are not likely to receive pardon of sinne, refusing to heare
the

the terrours of God against sinnes had not *David* made use of this remedy, God had not assured him, that his transgression was forgiven him, *1 Sam. 12. 12, 13.* Therefore listen and give diligent attention to the voyce of threatning, though it seeme harsh and bitter, like to the waters of *Marah*, yet it is healing, and medicinable for your soules; *Vbi peccatum, ibi procella*, saith *Chrysostome*, where disobedience and sinne against God is the fore-runner, there the storme of Gods most dreadfull indignation doth undoubtedly follow after: for sinne is so crosse and contrary to the pure Nature, and holy Majestie of God, that though the persons be renowned, and the places large, fertill, and glorious, if he cannot reforme them by Mercy, by Justice he will plucke them up, pull them downe, and bring destruction upon them. As God is the King of the whole earth, he hath a Scepter in one hand to testifie his Rule and Majestique authority, and a sword in the other, which he hath in heaven, to execute vengeance
upon

upon evill doers, for God is knowne by the judgements that he inflict upon the children of men. If sinne have a voyce to cry, God hath an eare to heare, and if it cry loud, he hath a hand to punish; for shall not the Judge of all the world doe right? God is not an idle spectator of mens vitious wayes; if they will not be reclaimed, they shall be condemned. For all the wicked shall be turned into hell. How ever the Lord be silent for a time, he will not alwayes hold his peace; if sinne awake him, and iniquity raise him, like a Lyon he will roare from heaven; whole Nations, and whole Kingdomes shall ring and Ecchoe with the sound of his indignation.

Psal. 96.

Gen. 18. 25.

Psal. 9. 17.

whole Nations, whole Kingdomes, are sometimes threatened to be pluckt up, to be pulled downe, and to be destroyed by the Lord. Witnesse the Amalekites, Numb. 24. 20. the Kenites, Num. 24. 21, 22. Babylon, Esay 13. 6, 7, 8, 9. Egypt, Esay 20. 4. and Moab, Esay 48. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. And no marvell, for God hath said, Hee will punish the world

Doctrine.

Isay 13.18.

world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity, that he will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and lay low the haughtinesse of the terrible.

Ier. 12. 2. 12.

Ill weedes must be pluckt up, ruinous buildings must be pulled downe, and vild creatures must be destroyed. Sinne hath taken roote, and the roote of bitternesse hath sprung up in *Israel*; though God be neare in her mouth, he is farre from her reines; It is just therefore that extirpation should be her portion, and eradication the lot of her inheritance. *Judah* is much decaied in holinesse, There is none that calleth upon God, and that stirreth up himselfe to seeke the Lord. What should God now doe, but pull her downe, lay her even with the ground, and cause the adversaries to tread upon the Sanctuary? *Esa. 63. 18.* If Nations grow so vile, that being grievous revolters, and walking with slanders, they are but Brasse and Iron, yea at the best but reprobate silver; shall not God reject them? *Ier. 6. 28, 29, 30.* and rejecting them, bring destruction upon

Esa. 64.7.

Plucke up.

upon them? These Metaphors set forth the dreadfulness of Gods incensed Justice. God is much grieved with a people, when he sweares in his wrath, *They shall not enter into his rest.* Nor lesse was hee provoked against *Coniah*, the sonne of *Iehojakim*, when hee said: *As I live, though thou wert as the signet upon my right hand, yet would I plucke thee thence.* It so vexes the Vine-dresser to see wilde grapes grow upon his Vine, that he plucks it up; and the Gardiner is so farre from being pleased, when hee sees Nettles spring up, where he hath bestowed his chiefeft cost, that forthwith he rootes them forth. Thus is God affected towards his barren trees, hee will not suffer them to cumber the ground, he is so moved upon the sight of them, that he sharpenes his Axe, layes it to the roote; cuts them downe, and throwes them into the fire. You may see this in *Hierusalem*, who appearing in her height, with the multitude of her wilde branches, as *Ezekiel* testifies, was plucked up in a fury.

Psal. 95. 10. 11.

Ier. 22. 23. 24.

Math. 3. 10.

Ezek. 19. 12.

This

Pull downe.

2 Chron. 34. 4.

They are tottering walls, not strong rampiers that men demolish; rotten houses, not strong and convenient mansions that men pull downe; they were the Altars of *Baalim*, not the Altar of Incense that *Iosiah* brake downe, the Groves, the carved and the molten Images that he brake in pieces, and making dust of them, strowed it upon the Graves of them that had sacrificed unto them. Had they beene commanded by the Lord, and thereupon usefull for himselfe, they had never beene demolisht by him, they were but rubbish and filthy trash, and therefore he pulled them downe.

Princes when they besiege a City, doe not presently scale the Walles, and put fire to the Forts and Palaces thereof; Its the peoples resistance that enrageth their spirits, and makes them with violence and cruelty proceed against them: When *Sheba* the sonne of *Bichri* lifted up his hand against *David*, *Joab* pursued him to *Abel*, so soone as they yeelded, cutting off the head of the Traytor, and casting it

it forth unto him, Hee blew a rump-
pet, every man retiring from the City
to his tent, and Ioab returned to Ieru-
salem. Had not the City given up
Sbeba into his hands, as hee had
cast up a banke against it, so it is
likely hee would have battered the
walls, ruined, and throwne them
downe.

2 Sam. 20. 21.
22.

Rebels, and traytors, not faith-
full, and loyall subjects, are fewell
for the fire of destruction. Samaria
must become desolate, her men
must fall by the sword, her chil-
dren must be dasht in pieces, and
her women with child must be ript
up, if shee rebell against her God.
If Zedekiah become tributary un-
to the King of Chaldaea, enter
into covenant, and sweare subjection,
and afterwards rebell against
him, sending his Ambassadors into
Egypt for horses and much people,
that he may rise up in armes, breake
off his yoke, and obtaine his liber-
ty by the sword; Then will the en-
raged King muster up his forces a-
gainst them, cut off the young
men in the house of their sanctuary,

Destroy.

Hof. 13. 16.

This was not
defensive, but of-
fensive; not for
God, but against
God.

F

burne

2 Chron. 35. 13;
17, 19.

Ier. 13. 14.

Iſa. 42. 13, 14.

*Quis digne con-
versantur, toleras;
non conversos du-
ctus damnas.
Grag.*

burne the house of God, breake the wall of Hierusalem, burne downe the palaces with fire, and destroy all the goodly vessels thereof. This word, *Destroy*, denotes the grievousnesse, and terriblenesse of the Lords wrath, excluding even all mercy, pity & compassion whatsoever. Can you thinke that God was not much provoked, when threatning the inhabitants of Hierusalem, hee said, hee would dash them one against another, the fathers and the sonnes together, that hee would not pity, nor spare, nor have mercy, but destroy them. God is incensed when hee goes forth like a mighty man, and stirs up jealousy like a man of warre, when hee cryes and roares, behaving himselfe mightily against his enemies: hee may long hold his peace, be still, and refrain himselfe, but if the currents of iniquity be not stopt, hee will not only threaten to pull downe, and destroy whole Kingdomes, and whole Nations; but hee will spoyle them, and even swallow them up at once.

Why

Why doth God menace whole Nations, whole Kingdomes?

First, whole Nations, and whole Kingdomes, do many times sinne against him, and by sinning provoke the eyes of his glory. Sinne, like a gangrene, runnes into all the joynts, and like a leprosie infects all the parts. This wee may see in the body or Commonwealth of Israel: for from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, there was no soundnesse, nothing but bruises, and putrified soares: You may compare their King to the head, their Priests and Prophets to the heart, and the Nobles and Commons to the rest of the members: in all these there was open prophanenesse as a wound, soule wickednesse as a bruise, and a high flowne spirit with inveterate malice, as a swelling and festered ulcer in their soules. *The men of Iudah cast out their wickednesse, (saith Ierem.) as the fountaine casteth out her waters.* Violence and spoyle were heard, and griefe, and wounds were continually be-

Isa. 1. 3, 4, 5, 6.

Ier. 6. 7, 13. 7

Ier. 7. 5. 10.

Ier. 9. 3.

to the Lord. From the least unto the greatest, every one was given unto covetousnesse, and from the Prophet unto the Priest, every one dealt falsly; yea they were growne so impudent in sinne, that they would steale, murder, and commit adultery; sweare falsly, burne incense unto *Baal*, and serve other gods whom they knew not, and yet come and stand before God in his house, and say, they were delivered to doe all these abominations. They bent their tongue like their bow for lies, they were not valiant for the truth, they proceeded from evill to worse: And shall not God be avenged on such a Nation as this? Though they were all corrupted, I will not say there was a parity in their finnes, some might sinne of ignorance, some against knowledge, some of infirmity, some of presumption, some might seduce others, and some might sinne at the seducing of others. Punishment seemes to have a gradation in these words: for that which is pluckt up may be planted againe, that

that which is pulled downe may be raised up, though that which is destroyed can never be restored. But however, wee cannot marvell if God menace whole Nations with extirpation, and whole Kingdomes with destruction, when by their sinnes and vices an affront is offered unto his holinesse.

Hereby God shewes how hee hates sinne, detests iniquity, and abominates all impiety: the whole infinitenesse of all his hatred is spent upon it, there is nothing in all the world that hee doth so properly and formally hate as sinne. Wherefore was it that God had a controversie with the inhabitants of the Land of Judah? was it onely because there was no truth, no mercy, no knowledge amongst them? surely this want of righteousness was enough to have brought a deluge of miseries upon them: yet there are positive evils too, for which God comes against them; for by swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they brake

Deo nihil est in odio: nisi malum: hoc est, nihil est ad inuisum, adiosum, execrabile, nisi malum: hoc autem est peccatum ipsum, & praeterea nihil. Zanch. de Natura Dei. l. 4. c. 7.

Hof. 4. 1. 2. 3.

Iosh. 7. 13. &c.

2 Sam. 24. 15.
17~

Ezra. 9. 1, 2, 13.

Zeph. 3. 8, 9.

Gen. 6. 5, 6.

Mich. 6. 6, 7, 8.

out, and blood toucheth blood, and therefore he said, that the Land should mourne. God hated those evils in them, and abhorres them no lesse in us. One sinfull *Achan* in the Hoste of Israel, may make the whole army to flee before the enemy. One sinne in *David* may cause seventy thousand men to fall by the pestilence in one day, from Dan to Beersheba. The evill deeds of the Israelites made them captives. The malicious speeches even the reproaches of *Moab*, and the scoffings of the children of *Ammon*, made God threaten them with the same judgement that hee brought upon Sodome: Yea, the continuall, and continued evill thoughts of the old world, brought an inundation of waters upon the whole earth. Infinite and divine hatred like a mighty torrent, runnes with all its forces against every sin: Wherewith then shall we of this Kingdome come before the Lord? Shall wee come before him with burnt offerings, and calves of a yeare old? Wil the Lord be pleased with thousands of

of ravines, or with ten thousands of
 rivers of joye? Shall we give the
 first borne for our transgression, and
 the fruit of our body for the sinne of
 our youth? No, no, these will not
 serve our turnes, Let us be justly,
 lowe mercy, and walk humbly with
 our God. ~~But when shall we~~
 by Gods comminations for the
 time are his gracious suspensions of
 their criminall offences; he would
 draw them by these cords, to re-
 pent them of their sinnes. God
 would have these his threatnings, as
 a dogge, to fetch them into the fold
 of Christ: as sorer and bitter poti-
 ons, to expell the ill, and hurtfull
 humors of their soules: as a bridle,
 to curbe their headstrong, and un-
 ruly corruptions: and as worme-
 wood, to weane them from the love
 of their vitious wayes. Why doth
 God say, that he will be unto Ephra-
 im as a lyon, and as a young lyon unto
 the house of Iudah: that he will teare,
 and goe away: that he will take away,
 and none shall rescue out of his hand:
 that hee will goe, and returne to his
 place? it is, that they may acknow-

Hof. 5. 14. 15.

ledge their transgressions, and seeke his face. And what, doe they suffer God to come so fiercely upon them, doe they not prevent the execution of his sore displeasure? Yes, for God no sooner turnes his backe upon them, but they follow him with mourning spirits, bleeding hearts, and grieved soules, *Hos. 6. 1.* O happy threatening that brings a sinfull creature to his knees! but more happy threatening that brings whole Nations, and Kingdomes to seeke the Lord! Why did God say to Hierusalem; *A voyce declareth from Dan, and publisheth affliction from mount Ephraim.* Surely it was, that seeing her neighbours house on fire, shee might feare the burning of her owne: nay, which is more, that shee might wash her heart from wickednesse, and so be saved from his wrath. Let the ruines of Germany make us feare, and fearing let us repent; for if sorrow kill sinne in our soules, God will not plucke us up; If wee humble our selves, and seeke his face, hee will not pull us downe; and

Ier. 4. 14, 15.

and if wee turne from the evill of our doing, hee will not destroy us, but heare from heaven, forgive our sinnes, and heale our soules.

How doth God plucke up, pull downe, and destroy whole Nations, whole Kingdomes?

1 As by pestilence and famine, so sometimes by the sword of the enemy. Thus the Lord mustering the Hosts of his battall, gathered together from farre the Kingdomes of Nations to be the weapons of his indignation, for the destruction of the whole land of Babylon. Read the Scriptures, peruse the histories that are now extant, and you shall find that populous Nations, fertile Kingdomes, and glorious Cities have by this means beene brought to ruine. For as David saith, *The mercy of an enemy is cruelty.*

2 How did God overthrow Egypt? did hee not set the Egyptians against the Egyptians? did they not fight every man against his brother, and every one against his neighbour, City against City, and Kingdome

Quest.

Answer.

Isa. 13. 4. 5.

Isa. 19. 2, 3.

Kingdome against Kingdome? Did hee not cause the spirit of Egypt to faile, and swallow up the counsell thereof? If God will bring destruction, Nations and Kingdomes shall be their owne ruine. Domestique jarrs are the worst: For a house divided against it selfe cannot stand. Civill warres are the most dangerous: Forraine enemies may be kept out, when home-bred vipers eat out the bowels of their owne Nation. The Lord give us to keepe the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. For a Kingdome divided against it selfe cannot stand. The Lord grant that wee the inhabitants of England, Scotland, and Ireland, may have our hearts united unto him, that wee may feare his Name. And whereas there is contentions amongst us, so knit our hearts together in the truth, that wee may all speake the same things, that divisions may cease, and that wee may be all of the same mind, and of the same judgement.

For what sinnes will God pluck up a Nation?

First,

First, for disobedience. Doth not God say to Solomon, and to his people, If yee turne away, and forsake my Statutes, and my Commandments which I have set before you, and shall serve other gods and worship them, then will I plucke you up by the roots out of my land, which I have given you, and the house which I have sanctified for my Name, will I cast out of my sight, and make it a proverbe and byword amongst all Nations. Is not God angry with the wicked every day? hath hee not prepared for him the instruments of death? Mans not obeying, as a whetstone sharpens the blunt edge of Gods justice, to hew him downe, and cut him up at the very root.

Secondly, for dissimu'ation. God cannot endure that men should carry two faces under one hood, having formes of godlinesse, to deny the power of it in their conversations. Men must be what they seeme to be, and seeme to be no otherwise than they are. For if men professe good things, and yet inwardly affect evill more than good, like beautifull

2 Chron. 7. 19,
20.

*Quibus sancta est
mens, sit sancta
conversatio. Aug.*

Psal. 52. 3, 4, 5.

beautifull apples, having rotten cores, though they may delude the world, yea Gods people many times with their false and deceitfull tongues: yet God who sees their naughty, and devillish hearts, will destroy them for ever; take them away; plucke them out of their dwelling places, and roote them out of the land of the living.

Thirdly, for oppression of the righteous; they that touch his Saints, touch the apple of his eye. They had better have a mill-stone hung about their neckes, and be cast into the sea, than molest, harme, or hurt one of his little ones: *Offences will come, but woe to them by whom they come.* If his people cannot live in quiet, their evill neighbours shall be hampered: for they that touch his inheritance, which hee hath caused his people Israel to inherit, shall be pluckt out of thine hand: and hee will plucke out the house of *Judah* from amongst them, *Ier. 12. 14.* I wish the voyce of the turtle, not the cry of these finnes was heard in our land.

For

Sacrilegiū quippe genus est, Dei odisse cultores: scius enim, si servos nostros quisquam cadat, nos in servorum nostrorum cadit injuriam: & si aliquis iam filius verberetur alienus, in supplicio filii pietas paterna torquetur: ita cum servus Dei a quoquam laeditur, Majestas divina violatur. Salvian. de gubern. Dei, lib. 8.

For what sinnes doth God pull
downe a people?

Quest.

It is thought, that for pride God
threw the Angels out of heaven: I
am sure it was for this that God
thundered from Heaven against
wicked and ungracious Edom.

Answer.

Therefore, saith hee, The pride of
thine heart hath deceived thee: thou
that dwellest in the cliffes of the rockes,
whose habitation is high, that saith in
his heart; who shall bring mee downe
to the ground? though thou exalt
thy selfe as the Eagle, and though thou
set thy nest among the starres, thence
will I bring thee downe. Shebna
heweth him out a sepulcher at Hie-
rusalem, and graveth a habitation
for himselfe in a rocke, as if hee
should never be removed from
thence, thinking his name should
not be obliterated, but his memori-
all continue for ever: But doth God
approve of this his vaine glorious,
and ambitious spirit? No, saith
Isaiah, He will surely violently turne
and scatter thee like a ball in a large coun-
try, where shalt thou die, and there
the chariot of thy glory shall be the
shame

Obad. vers. 3, 4.

Isa. 22. 15, 17,
18, 19.

shame of thy Lords house: Hee will drive thee from thy station; and from thy state shall hee pull thee downe. Trees growing upon the top of mountaines, are not onely shaken, but easily rent up by the rootes with every blustering blast, and stormy tempest.

For what sinnes doth God destroy a Kingdome?

First, for apostasie: If *Lots* wife looke backe towards *Sodome*, she shall be turned into a pillar of salt: If the *Jewes* become back-sliders, God will say to that Nation, *Thou hast forsaken mee, thou art gone backward, therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee, and destroy thee, for I am weary with repenting.* We have beene zealous for God, and hot in religion, but now wee have lost our first love; let us remember from whence we are fallen, repent, and doe our first workes, lest God come quickly, and remove our candlestick out of its place. It is true, wee cannot but sometimes foule our feete, for who liveth, and sinneth not? but we must take heed that

Ier. 15. 6.

Apoc. 2. 43.

that wee do not rundle in the mire of our iniquities; our latter end will be then worse than our beginning. While we live here, we are likely to offend Christ our spouse, for sinne will bee in our mortall bodies, when it cannot saigne. But wee must be carefull that we do not breake faith, and the bond of wedlocke, for Christ as a jealous husband will never take this at our hands: For- sake the guide of thy youth, and forget the covenant of thy God, and thou shalt be destroyed.

Secondly, when Kingdomes will not be admonished, stopping their eares at his voyce in the ministry, refusing to hearken, that without controlment, and with more freedome they may goe on in their sinnes. This is a provoking sinne: this of all others must not escape: for this God will lay righteousness to the line, and judgement to the plummet: and therefore hee saith to Israel; *Because yee have not heard my words, behold I will send and take all the families of the North, and Nebuchad-nezzar the King of*

Jer. 25. 8, 9.

of Babylon my servant, and will bring them against this Land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all those nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, &c. Let us not refuse his counsels, let us accept of his reproofes, lest hee laugh at our destruction, and mocke when our feare commeth.

*Nos & vivimus, &
succumur: sed nec
ferris defellimur,
nec cauteriorum
adustione sanamur,
immo quod
est gravius, cura
spem deteriores sumus.
Salvian. de
gubern. Dei, l. 7.*

Thirdly, for incorrigiblenesse, when they will not be amended by corrections, when they will not learne righteousness, his judgments being abroad upon the face of the earth: the rod hath its voice, every stroke should teach us observance. God lookes that affliction should bring forth the fruits of righteousness in our soules. Hee is much displeased, when they do not prove as the fining pot to the silver, and as the furnace unto the gold, to purge out the dross of our corrupt affections. If God strike *Judah*, and shee grieve not, if hee lay chastisements upon her, and shee make her face harder than a rocke, and refuse to returne; if her Nobles and Commons breake the yoke,

yoke, and burst the bonds. A lyon out of the Forrest shall slay them, a wolfe of the evening shall spoyle them, and a leopard shall watch over their cities; every one that goeth out shall be torne in pieces, because their transgressions are many, and their backslidings are increased. Let not us be like the smiths anwill, the harder for our stroakes.

Jer. 6. 3, 4, 5, 6.

When doth God menace whole Nations, and whole Kingdomes with extirpation and destruction? First, what is the voyce of Gods messengers? do they speake peace, or *thunder* like, do they thunder out judgements, breath out threatnings, and hang out the blacke flags of the Lords displeasure? Do not holy men of God speake as they are inspired by the holy Ghost? Did not God touch the tongue of *Isaiah*, with a coale from his altar, before hee sent him against the rebellious house of Iudah? God doth nothing, but hee reveales it to his servants the Prophets. If hee purpose ruine to the old world, *Noah*, that Preacher of righteousness,

Amos 3. 7.

G

shall

Gen. 6. 13.

Gen. 18. 17.

Ier. 91. 2.

Ioel. 2. 17.

shall be acquainted with the same. If hee intend destruction to Sodom, he will not conceale it from Abraham. Ieremy fore-sees the misery of his people, and therefore he wishes that his head was waters, and his eyes a fountaine of teares, that hee might weepe day and night for the slaue of them. When the Priests, the Ministers of the Lord, weepe betweene the porch and the altar, and say, Spare thy people O Lord; and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the Heathen should use a by-word against them; It is a signe that there is some danger imminent, and some trouble at hand. Gods spirit doth wonderfully guide and direct the studies, meditations, and words of his servants. If they speake comfortably to Hierusalem, shee hath cause to reioyce: if they reprove sinne, shee hath cause to grieve: if they menace judgement, shee may well feare: they shoot not at rovers, they speake not at randome, they publish not the suggestions of an euill spirit, but they deliver what they have received from the Lord.

If

If these cocks crow loud and thick,
Israel may looke for a boysterous
storme.

Secondly, when God takes a-
way his people, who are, as it were
the bases, and the pillars of a Nati-
on, the earth and all the inhabi-
tants thereof are dissolved: *I beare*
up the pillars of it, saith holy David.

Psal. 75. 5.

Take away the maine posts, and the
building falls to the ground. God
doth this sometimes by removing
them out of the place which hee
intends to make a president of his
wrath. In streffe of weather God

hath his sheepe-coats to shelter his
flocke, in invasion of enemies hee
hath a towre of defence for the pre-
servation of his chosen ones. If
God ship *Noah* in the Arke, the wa-
ters will come upon the earth. If
hee pull out *Lot*, and send him to-
wards *Zoar*, fire and brimstone
shall raine from heaven upon wic-
ked *Sodom*. If God plucke out
the house of *Judah* from *Babylon*,
she may then looke for the viall of
wrath to be powred upon her for
her rebellion. Sometimes by death

Gen. 7. 1. 7. 10.

Gen. 19. 12, 13,
&c.

Jer. 12. 14.

hee takes them away from the evill
 to come. As by this God prevents
 their prayers, which do, as it were,
 hold his hands: *Let mee alone, Moses,*
that my wrath may waxe hot against
this people; so by their removall hee
 makes the way more facill for his
 fierce displeasure. When the wheat
 is winnowed, and carried into the
 garner, will not the winde easily, and
 quickly blow away the chaffe?
 These stay and prevent the ripen-
 ing of sinne; and sinne must be ripe
 before the Amorites be cut off.
 Whilst *Moses* is alive, the sluces
 are set downe: if *Moses* be dead, the
 blacke waters of iniquity will runne
 roaring with a full current. Then
 Israel will rise up, goe a whoring
 after other gods, forsake the Lord,
 and breake the covenant that shee
 hath made with him. By *Moses*
 death the flood-gates are pulled up.
 Gods translation of his children
 from the prophane world to heaven,
 presages vengeance approaching,
 and justice shortly to be inflicted
 upon it: For if *Moses* sleepe with
 his Fathers, then Gods anger shall
 be

Deut. 31. 16.

Deut. 31. 17.

be kindled against them, hee will forsake them, hide his face from them, and devour them, causing many evils and troubles to fall upon them. *Stilico* said of *Ambrose*, that his death threatned destruction to Italy.

Thirdly, lesser judgements are preludiums, and forerunners of greater, therefore wee must heare the rod, and who hath appointed it. Hierusalem saw affliction in the rod of his indignation. Pestilentiall sicknesses precede his fiery burning, and consuming coales, *Hab.* 3. 5. By them hee doth but make way for his anger, that hee may not spare their soules in death. As every deliverance is a warning-piece to sinne no more: so every stroake of Gods displeasure (not working amendment in our soules) doth but presage more grievous miseries to come upon us; if Israel will not repent for lesser stripes, God will punish yet seven times more. His bruising with a rod of iron doth but precede his breaking them in pieces like a potters vessell.

Micah. 6. 9.

Lam. 3. 1.

Psal. 87. 50.

Levit. 26. 18.

Psal. 2. 9.

Object.

Ecclef. 8. 11.

Judgements threatned are not alwaies inflicted. What though the sentence be denounced, it may be it will not be speedily, if ever executed.

2 Sam. 12. 14.

2 Sam. 12. 18.

Ier. 4. 28.

Comminations are either absolute, or conditionall: when *David* had committed adultery, and embred his hands in the blood of *Uriah*, God told him, that the child that was borne unto him should surely die: This was irrevocable, for a period was put unto the childs dayes by the stroake of death. These are accompanied sometimes with strong asseverations, like those wherein God expressed himselfe against the inhabitants of Judah. *The land shall be desolate, the earth shall mourne, and the heavens above be blacke: I have spoken it, I have purposed it, and will not repent, nor will I turne backe from it.* That must needs stand, which the Lord thus avoucheth. Created powers can no way nullifie his decrees. Yet to make his threatnings (if it were possible) more sure, hee sometimes swears the execution of

of them. I sweare by my selfe, this house shall become a desolation. Gods shewes the immutability of his purpose. Amongst men it is the end of all strife. If the Lord sweare he will not repent, he may change his sentence, but never reverse his oath: if hee have once sworne that *Moses* shall not enter into the Land of Canaan, though hee repent him of his sinne, and earnestly intreat his favour, hee cannot obtaine his request, but receives a kinde of rebuke: Let it suffice, *speake no more in mee of this matter.*

Al that hee prevayles for, is to ascend to the top of *Pisgah*, and behold it with his eyes. But where Gods menaces are conditionall, as in this place, they may be recalled. Though hee say to *Abimelech*, *Thou art but a dead man, for the woman that thou hast taken is a mans wife: yet if Sarah be restored, and Abraham pray for him, his dayes shall be prolonged.* Though *Isaiah* come with a message from heaven, and bid *Haze-krab* set his house in order, hee

Ier. 22. 5.

Heb. 6. 13, 14, 15, 16.

Psal. 110. 4.

Deut. 3. 25, 27.

Gen. 23. 7.

2 King. 20. 7, 5, 6.

Iona 3. 4.

Joel. 2. 14.

Gen. 19. 13.

must die and not live; because the commination is not absolute, prayers and teares may prevaile for an addition of fifteene yeares. Thus it was in *Ionahs* prophesie concerning the destruction of Nineveh, *Yet forty dayes and Nineveh shall be destroyed: yet Nineveh repenting, was not brought to desolation.* God changed his revealed will, the Prophecie fell, but the City fell not. If the decree be conditionall, returne, and God will returne in mercy to your soules. Try, though it be peremptorily denounced, it may be upon your reversion, hee will repent, and leave a blessing behind him. But suppose the Angels should say to you, as sometimes they sayd concerning Sodome, *wee will destroy this place: The Lord hath sent us to destroy it: yet repent, it may be God hath a little Zoar, wherein hee will shelter you in the day of wrath.*

Secondly, because God doth not inflict justice, wilt thou therefore be rebellious? God shewes
favour

favour to the wicked, that he may learne righteousness. If hee doe not eradicate or pull up by the rootes the barren tree, it is that it may be fruitfull for the time to come. Because grace abounds, shall sin abound much more? God forbid. Neither thinke, because God lets thee alone for the present, that hee doth acquit thee, and will never reckon with thy soule: for as hee that pursueth evill, pursueth it to his owne death: so though a wicked man may live to commit one and the selfe same sinne an hundred times, yet it shall not be well with him: his dayes shall not be prolonged, hee shall not be prolonged, hee shall be cut off. Take heed, though judgements come slowly, they come surely, they sleepe not: they are alwayes upon the way, if you looke not about you, they will be upon your backs before you be aware.

•Thirdly, be not secure, because that misery doth not forthwith seise upon you: punishments are but suspended, not removed that are

Isa. 26. 10.

Prov. 11. 19.

Eccles. 8. 13, 14.

2 Pet. 3. 3.

Deut. 29. 20.

are deferred. *Agas* may thinke the bitterneſſe of death is paſt, when the ſword of juſtice is ready to hew him all in pieces. And the fire of Gods jealousie ſhall breake forth againſt them, who after God hath threatned, promiſe impunity to themſelves. The further the carpenter fetcheth his ſtroake, and the higher hee liſteth up his hand, the deeper doth the axe enter into the roote of the tree: hee liſting up the axe deferrēs the ſtroake, but yet addes force and violence to the blowe. The more the archer bends his bow, and the neater the head hee drawes the arrow, the more deeply and deadly doth hee wound the ſtagge. His deferring is but to take his ayme, and his drawing forth is but to give a ſorer and more mortiferous wound. The ſtay of judgements is no removall; by delay they acquire more force, more ſtrength, more violence againſt the ſoule.

But why doth not God deſtroy whole Nations, and whole Kingdomes, having threatned to bring

bring destruction upon them :

First was the Ministry of the Gospell either wholly removed, or wholly corrupted; then nothing but desolation could be expected. Israel yet enjoyes her Prophets, and sees her teachers, her gates are not yet shut against them; neither are they banished out of her dominions, and therefore it may be the Lord lets her alone. Soe long as the arke of God remained in the family of *Obed Edom* in his house, the Lord blessed the house of *Obed-Edom*, and all that he had. *Jeremy* pressing hard upon God, useth this as a strong and forcible argument to move him to pity the estate of Judah: that hee was yet in the midst of them by his ordinances, and that they were called by his name, viz: his children; and therefore by way of expostulation, he asketh the Lord, Why he should be as a man astonished, or as a mighty man that could not save: For his words sake God is sometimes propitious to a wicked people. For though they rebell against him

1 Chron. 13. 14.

Jerem. 14. 9.

Ezek. 20. 8, 9.

him, and will not hearken to him, refusing to cast away the abominations of their eyes: And though hee himselte have said, He will powre out his fury upon them to accomplish his anger against them, yet for this his name sake, hee will worke that they may not be polluted before the Heathen. If Ephesus remember not from whence shee is fallen, repent, and doe her first workes, but provoke his wrath yet more and more, God will remove her candlestick out of his place. Let that be taken away, and then judgement, or God in justice will come quickly, and dispatch her all at once. The Word is as the Arke, the glory of Israel: Let that depart, then farewell prosperity; wee may well mourne, and bid adiew to the halcyon dayes of a prosperous estate.

Gen. 12. 2, 3.

Secondly, it may be they enjoy the presence of Gods darlings, Gods jewels; *vid.* sincere & faithfull Christians. In what place soever *Abraham* is, he is a blessing to that place: if they kindly entertaine him they are

are blessed for his sake ; but if they curse him, they are accursed for his cause. Had there beene but tenne righteous found in *Sodome*, *Gomorrah*, *Admah*, *Ziboim*, and *Zoar*, those five insolent and wicked Cities had beene spared for tennes sake. Did not the Lord blesse the *Egyptian* ? and was not his blessing upon all that hee had in the house, and in the field for *Iosephs* sake ? The innocent shall deliver the Iland, and it is delivered by the purenesse of his hands. And hence it is that the Prophet *Esay* acknowledgeth, looking upon the sinfull and miserable estate of his people : That if the Lord of hostes had not left them a very small remnant, they should have bin as *Sodome* & her sister *Gomorrhah*. While the children and servants are in the house, the Father or Master will not pull downe the house.

Thirdly, it may be Gods people supplicate the Lord in their behalfe. Their prayers, if I may speake it with holy reverence, are as strong cords to tie Gods hands. God said he would destroy the

Gen. 18. 32.

Gen. 39. 5.

Iob 22. 30.

Esay 1. 9.

Psal. 106. 23.

the *Israelites*; and hee had done so, had not *Moses* his chosen stood before him in the breach to turne away his wrath, lest he should destroy them. If sinne begin to ripen, and the vials of wrath beginne to fill, God lookes that some body should intercede for the diverting of his dreadfull anger. Iniquitie was growne to a great height amongst the *Jewes*, Judgement was turned backward, Justice stood a farre off, Truth fell in the streets, and Equity could not enter; yea, Truth so farre failed, that hee that departed from evill made himselfe a prey, hee was counted a *Bedlam*, a madde or a distracted person. The Lord saw this, and it displeased him, yet in the midst of his displeasure he wondred that there was no intercessor: Shall estates be corrupted in *Judah*, and God seeke for a man amongst them to make up the hedge, and to stand in the gappe before him for the Land, that he should not destroy it, and finde none? then he will powre out his indignation, and consume them.

Ezay 59. 14, 15,
16.Ezech. 22. 25.
and 31.

the fire of his wrath, recompencing their wayes upon their owne heads. It is not Policy, but Prayers, not force of almes, but humble and earnest seeking unto God by prayer of supplication, that staves judgments threatened from falling upon a Land and Kingdome.

First, we see that generalitie in a way of sinne will not excuse any people from the punishment of sinne, though hand joyned in hand, saith *Salomon*, the wicked shall not escape. If the whole earth be filled with violence, and corrupted before God, shall it not be destroyed? Because all men the of the City, both old and young, from every quarter, rage, and gather themselves tumultuously together about *Lots* doore, to lay violent hands upon his strangers, taunting him, as if hee desired to be a Judge over them, and threatening destruction, because he will not bring forth the Angels unto them, is their fact therefore to be excused? Or shall they, because they are so many, be spared by the Lord? No, as they sinne together,

Pro. 11. 22.

Gen. 6. 11, 12.
13.

Gen. 19. 4, 5, 6.
7. &c.

by

Jer. 5. 7.

Jer. II. 9. 10.

Esay I. 21.

by fire and brimstone shall they be consumed one with another: If this would have done any good, the *Jewes* might well have pleaded for themselves. All estates, high and low, rich and poore, breake the bonds of holinesse, and cast away the cords of obedience from them; view but the villanies of the vulgar, and common people, Did they not forsake the Lord, swear by thē that were not Gods, and when they were fed to the full; commit adultery, and assemble themselves by troopes in harlots houses? Doth not *Ieremias* tell us of a Conspiracy that was found among the men of *Judah*, and the Inhabitants of *Ierusalem*? Every one turning backe to the iniquities of their Fore-fathers, refusing to hearken, serving other Gods, and breaking Covenant with the Lord. But surely the Princes were better? No, saith *Esaiah*, they are rebellious perverting the Law of God, not keeping faith with their subiects, yea, and companions of theeves too, not punishing their oppressions, but parting stakes with them, they

they are justified and absolved by them, they themselves love gifts, and follow after rewards, they judge not the fatherlesse, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them. *Zephaniab* tells us, that they were roaring Lyons, and that her Judges were ravening Wolves, that gnaw not the bones till the morrow, *Zepha. 3. 3.* Yea, they were so cruell that they afflicted the just, tooke Bribes, and turned aside the poore in the gate from their right, *Amos 5. 12.* Whatever they got, they parted not with it; and however they got it, they rejoyced in it, for they dranke the wine of the condemned, such as they had fined in the house of their God, *Amos 2. 8.* But surely the Priests would have had them to have done better; There's never a Barrell better Herring; her Priests are as bad as the rest: this you shall see, if you peruse these places, *Ier. 5. 31. Ier. 23. 10, 11. Lam. 4. 10, 11. Ezek. 22. 26, 28.* O wofull Commonwealth! O wretched people! how can the Lord pardon them? how can hee but be avenged on such a

*Præfati populo
regendo priores
sunt subditi, præ-
varicatores legum
divinarum, &
fidem civibus ma-
nime servantes;
Socii furum quos
vel non puniunt
vel partes eripi-
endo absol. Pellet.
in locum.
Societatis furum,
quoniam fures
defendebant, &
ipsi rapinis usu-
risque pascebantur.
Heq. Pint. in*

Micah. 3. 1 & 2.

finis

H

Nation

Nation as this? Doe not bouldster up your selves with this, that your finnes are no other than such as rule and raigne in all degrees, and in all quarters of the Nation where you live; this shall not excuse you; for as all the Nations that forget God, shall be turned into hell; so you partaking of their finnes, shall also partake with them of their woes. Nationall finnes will bring Nationall judgements. Though all your nei hbours walke in the pathes of sin, there's no safety in those pathes for your soules. Prove therefore your owne worke, you must be sure to beare your owne burthen. Beware that you be not led away with the Error of the wicked. Let Christs example be your imitation, and as deare Children be yee followers of God. Whilst you looke at the actions of the vulgar, you fixe your eyes upon wrong objects, for the most part, they are none of Christs friends, for they are disobedient, 1 Pet. 3. 10. They are the lewde fellows that cry downe holinesse, and set whole cities on an uprore against

Gal. 6. 4. 5.
 2 Pet. 3. 17.
 Ephes. 5. 1.

gainst the Saints of God, *Acts 17.*
4, 5. These rebuke the blind man,
 and will not permit him to cry for
 mercy to the sonne of *David*. If
Zachew get not from these into a
 Sycamore tree, hee shall goe with-
 out the sight of Christ: Therefore
 follow not a multitude to doe evil;
 have no fellowship with the un-
 fruitfull workes of darkenesse, but
 rather reprove them; Take heede of
 Drunkenesse, Adultery, Cove-
 teousnesse, Idolatry, Swearing, Ly-
 ing, foolish Talking, and Jestings;
 these for the most part are Nation-
 nall finnes, because of these things
 commeth the wrath of God upon
 the children of disobedience; yea,
 for these things God will pull
 downe whole Nations, whole
 Kingdomes: See from hence what a
 dangerous thing sinne is; though
 with the Panther, with its white
 spots of seeming pleasures, it
 seemes glorious in the eye of a car-
 nall heart, yet all that follow it, are
 lacerated and torne in peeces by it.
 It is the shelve or rocke that splits
 the ship of our soules; For tribula-

Luke 18. 39.
Luke 19. 3.
Exod. 23. 2.
Ephes. 5. 18.

Ephes. 5. 6.

The wofull effects of sinne,
Deut. 32. 40, 41.

Pro. 14. 3. 4.

Esay 3. 1, 2, 3. 4.

tion, and anguish, shall be upon every soule that doth evill. God is so farre from approving it, that his soule hateth it, his Law curseth and condemneth it, and his hand smiteth and scourgeth it. It was his motive to cast Angels into Hell, to thrust *Adam* out of Paradise, to turne cities into Ashes, and to ruinate whole Nations: For he hath sworne that he will whet his glittering sword, and his hand shall take hold on Judgement to execute vengeance upon sinners: Its nothing but mens vicious courses, their insolent behaviours, and their rebellious actions that threatens misery, hastens ruine, and pulls downe destruction upon whole Kingdomes; for as righteousness exalteth a Nation, so Sinne is a reproach unto any people. Oh what wofull confusion did it bring upon the Land of *Judah*, and the famous City of *Jerusalem*, when it tooke away her whole staffe of bread, and stopt her Spring that she could get no water; when it tooke away her mighty men, her man of war, the Judge, the Prophet, the

the Prudent, the Ancient, the Cap-
tain, the Honorable, the Counsellor,
the cunning Artificer, and the Elo-
quent Orator, when it brought in
children to be their Princes, & babes
for to be their Rulers. Peace and
plenty are not onely ornaments, but
maine props in a settled estate, but
what though they be the maine Pil-
lars in a flourishing Common-
wealth, yet sinne will plucke them
downe, and carry them quite away;
If *Israel* forsake the Lord, then there
is no peace to him that goes out,
nor him that comes in, but great
vexations are upon the Inhabi-
tants of all the Countries: yea, then
Nation is destroyed of Nation, and
City of City, and God vexeth them
with all adversities. And doth not
the holy Spirit give evidence in the
word of Life, concerning scarcity,
as a fruite of iniquity? For the wic-
kednesse of thy workes whereby
thou hast forsaken me, thou shalt
be smitten with Blasting and with
Mildew; the Heaven which is over
thy head shall be brasse; and the
Earth that is under thee, shall be

2 Chro. 15. 5, 6.

Deut. 28. 23, 24.

Hof. 2. 5.

Pfal. 107. 33. 34

Heb. 3. 12. 13.

Iron : In stead of raine, thou shalt have dust and ashes, even from heaven shall it come downe upon thee untill thou be destroyed. It was for this that God tooke from his people, his come in the time thereof, and his wine in the season thereof; and that hee recovered his Wooll, and his Flaxe, which he sent her to cover her shame; he turneth Rivers into a Wildernesse, Water-springs into dry ground, and a fruitfull Land into barrenesse, for the wickednesse of them that dwell therein. Men, like Vipers, conceive sinne to their owne death, and Kingdomes giving way to impiety, receive Gunpowder for their owne destruction, for where ever sinne comes, it layes all open to waste and spoyle: wherefore let mee give you the Apostles caveat to the Hebrewes; Take heed lest there be in any of you an evill heart of unbeleeft in departing from the living God; Exhort one another daily, whilst it is called so day, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulnesse of sinne.

Take notice of the fiercenesse and
terri-

terriblenesse of the wrath of Almighty God: No marvell, if David prayes; *Lord rebuke mee: neither chastise me in thy sore displeasure:* For if God be incensed, the Mountaines quake, the Hills melt, the Rivers are exsiccate, Bashan is blasted, and languishing is brought upon Carmell, and the flower of Libanon: Can any stand before his indignation? No, It is a consuming fire, and burnes unquenchably to the lowest hell. It is so grievous that none knoweth the power thereof. If God strike, and but one sparke take hold of the tinder of our corruptions, it so takes that it ceaseth not, untill it hath brought destruction; yea, here you see it threatens whole Kingdomes, and whole Nations with desolations: We may see this set forth in its dreadfulness by the holy Ghost, in the Propheties of *Jeremiah*, where it is compared to Fury; nay Fury like Fire, *Let my fury breake forth like fire, & none can quench it.* to Fury exceeds Anger, both in proportion, violence and continuance; for God

Psal. 6. 1.
Nahum. 3. 4. 5.

Deut. 32. 22.

Psal. 90. 11.

Ier. 4. 4.

*Furor omnipoten-
tis Dei in hoc
quotidie vim su-
am diffinitionis
peragit, quod vi-
uentes indigne,
digni supplicis
demergit. Greg.
mor. 12. cap. 7.
Deut. 7. 21.*

Psal. 59. 5.

Zeph. 1. 2.

being highly provoked, weighes our actions in the scales of his Justice; having weighed them, he stretcheth out his hand to heaven, that his stroakes may be proportionable to our demerits; neither doth he onely turne his Whippes into Scorpions, laying smart, heavy, and grievous blowes upon us, but hee ever holds on, and ceaseth not striking, untill he hath pulled downe Kingdomes, and rooted out sinfull Nations. God incensed is very terrible, he doth not then speake so much with his Tongue, as with his Hand; He comes not with healing under our Wings, but like an Eagle with destruction to his prey; If the bright Sunne of his favour be clouded with the cloud of his wrath, he appears not as a Father, but as a Judge, yea, an irefull Judge, with whom there is no mercy, nor pity, nor compassion for wicked transgressors; for if hee finde their places before him like *Edom*, hee will leave them behinde him as barren as *Zeboim*: His fury like fire consumes all before it; the approach of his displeasure will make

make the Mighty men to cry
bitterly, for that day is a day of
wrath, a day of trouble and distresse,
a day of waisting and desolation, a
day of darknesse, and gloominesse,
a day of clouds and thicke dark-
nesse, a day of the trumpet and al-
larne against the fenced cities, yea
a day that brings such distresse
upon men, that they walke as blind,
having sinned against the Lord.
So their blood is powred out as
dust, and their flesh as dung, their
silver and gold being no way able to
deliver them: as his anger is irre-
sistible, like an over-running flood,
so is it implacable, water will not
extinguish it, nay prayers with
cries and teares will not allay the
heate thereof.

For then shall men call upon
God for mercy, but he will not an-
swer, yea and they shall seeke him
early too, but they shall not finde
him. It is so insatiable, that like
the grave, the barren wombe, the
earth, that is not filled with water,
and the fire, it saith not it is enough;
for as his sword like a sponge, will
drinke

Zeph. 1. 15, 16,
17, 18.

Nahum. 1. 8.

Prov. 1. 18.

Prov. 30. 16.

Deut. 32. 4. 2.	drinke in blood; so it will eate and devoure the flesh of the flaine. And as it destroyes from one end of the land to the other, none having peace: So it quickly dispatcheth, making a speedy riddance, even of whole Nations. But that which may seeme most to be admired, is this, that God is very terrible in the assembly of his Saints; in his true Church, and amongst his owne people: yet beloved wee find it to be so, for though God did appro- priate himselfe unto the Jewes, both by covenant, and by Oath, for all that he tells them, that hee will doe unto them, that which hee had not done, and so as that hee would not doe any more the like. And though they had his temple, which he sanctified for his name, yet hee determines to cast that out of his sight, to make it a by-word among all Nations, and an astonishment to all that passe by it. O heare but the dolefull, and pitifull complaint of Hierusalem concerning her own misery, & therein you may see God not sparing her, but even laying his
Ier. 12. 12.	
Zeph. 1. 18.	
Psal. 89. 7.	
Ier. 31. 31. 33.	
Ier. 31. 47. 5	
Ezek. 5. 9.	
2 Chron. 7. 20. 21.	

his dreadfull indignation upon her, Behold and see if there be any sorrow like my sorrow, which is done unto mee, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me, in the day of his fierce anger. Under the whole heaven, hath not beene done (saith Daniel) as hath beens done to Hierusalem. Thus you see, God striketh his owne as wicked men, in the sight of others. If they sinne, God marketh them, and will not acquit them from their iniquities. yea, his fire is in Zion, and his furnace in Hierusalem. But what should I multiply places to prove the terriblenesse of Gods wrath: the very tortures of afflicted consciences, plainly explicate this particular. Oh what shedding of teares, tearing of haire, our cries, sighes, and groanes, when God is displeased, and the soule set upon the rack! yea if a drop of his anger, like boiling oyle, or melted lead, fall upon their spirits, and that out of commiseration, and love unto their soules, they not perceiving it, Oh what horrors and feares hath it brought upon them! yea, how hath

Lament. 3. 12.

Dan. 9. 12.

Job. 34. 26.

Job. 10. 14.

Isa. 31. 9.

Levit. 25. 15,
16, 17.

hath it inforced them to bitter lamentation, yea to the consumption of their flesh and spirits! Oh then let us take heede that wee do not adde coales to burning coales, or fewell to the fire of Gods displeasure. Let us not dispise his Statutes: let not our soules abhorre his judgements, so as not to do all his Commandements, but to breake his covenant, for if in these wee be not carefull, the Lord will appoint over us terrour, consumptions, and burning agues, which shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart; then we shall sow our seede in vaine, and the enemy shall eate it, yea God will so set his face against us, that wee shall be slaine before our enemies; they that hate us shall raigne over us, and wee shall flee when none pursues us. Why then doe wee not kisse the sonne lest hee be angry? doe wee not see that they who stirre up his fury perish without pitty? did not his wrath drown the old world, swallow up the Egyptians, and woefully & miserably consume the Sodomites?

domites? Let us then be wise, let us be instructed, let us serve the Lord with feare, for as hee is mercifull to them that feare him, so hee is terrible to them that walke stubbornly before him; yea if wee hold on our course in the way of sinne, we may move him to threaten, to plucke up, to pull downe, and to destroy our whole Nations, our whole Kingdomes.

This lets us see what wee have cause to feare, even that wrath is gone forth, and that judgement is begunne amongst us: Gods Heralds proclame warre, and their threatnings are not to be despised, but feared; not carelesly passed over, but prevented; not derided, but particularly applyed unto our soules.

It may be wee have not seene Hierusalems blazing starre, like a sword; nor horses and chariots with armed troopes in the aire; nor the eclipse of the moone for twelve nights together; nor yet a voyce in our Temples, wishing us to depart from hence: Yet I am sure, that as the righteous perisheth, and no man layeth

*Ioseph. de bello
Iud. lib. 7. cap. 12.*

Isa. 57. 1.

layeth it to heart, and mercifull
men are taken away, none conside-
ring that they are taken from the
evill to come; so God by lesse,
and lighter judgements hath fore-
warned us of greater miseries.

Hee first sent blastings and mil-
dewes, upon Israel; then hee gave
her gardens, her vineyards, and her
olive trees, to the palmer worme
to devoure; and when these would
not prevaile, hee sent amongst
them, the pestilence after the man-
ner of Egypt, and slew their young
men with the sword; but when these
would not serve, hee overthrew
them, as hee overthrew Sodome
and Gomorrah. Oh my beloved,
what meanes the pestilence, and
other strange, and unknowne disea-
ses in this our Land? Hath not the
Lord opened the fluces of the win-
dowes of heaven, and given us un-
reasonable showers, now in the time
of our harvest? Are not the egges
of the Romish Cockatrice, become
serpents? & is it to no end that they
flocke so fast together? do they not
hold it unlawfull for Christians to
tolerate

Amos 4. 8.

tolerate an hereticall King, and that they may expell him, depose him, yea murder him? The Lord preserve our Sovereign, that hee fall not into their bloody hands. Doe they not maintaine, that if warre be once proclaimed by them, against Sectaries (that is, in their language, us Protestants) then it is lawfull for any man to take spoyle, kill such Sectaries, and burne their houses over their heads? Beloved, they are great, they are strong, they are many: wee have so long nourished these Antichristian brats, neglecting the exile, and suppression of this Babylonish blood, that I perswade my selfe (I would I were deceived in it) they are able to raise up fiftie or three score thousand in armes at this day, in this our Judah, against us; surely, this portends some mischiefe at hand: for these foxes will destroy the vines that have tender grapes. But that which may adde strength to them, and hasten our feared sorrowes, is the fearfull divisions, and lamentable distractions in this our Nation.

*Bellarm. lib. 3. d.
Rom. Pontif. cap.
6, 7.*

*Symonch. Infit.
cath. cap. 45. sect.
12.*

Cant. 2. 15.

Hof. 7. 16.

Amos 8. 4, 5.

Ier. 84. 5.

Matt. 23. 3.

on. The Lord unite all our hearts unto him, that wee may feare his Name. I wish I could not speake of warre, and rumours of warre: Harke, the trumpet sounds, iniquity beats the drumme, and strikes up the allarme for the battell; Oh beloved, can wee see, can wee heare all these things, and not feare? wee have abused Gods mercies, for though hee have bound, and strengthened our armes, wee have imagined mischief against him. Do wee not swallow up the needy, and make the poore of the land to faile? Do wee not say, When will the new moone be gone, that wee may sell corne, and the Sabbath be ended, that we may set forth wheat, making the Ephah small, & the shekell great, falsifying the ballances by deceit? Are we not settled upon our lees, crying out, what have wee done? I would the sinnes of them who professe themselves to be the true children of the Church, did not call for vengeance against our Nation, how many is there that say, and do not, having silver tongues, but

but base and prophane lives? How many is there that speake evill of dignities, instead of praying for them that be in authority over them? How many pay tythe of Mint, Annis, and Cummin, neglecting the weightier things of the Law, Judgement, Mercy, and Faith? Oh what by ends, and base respects have many, seeking themselves, not God in the performance of holy duties? These, these are the finnes that scandalize that profession, discredit the Gospell, and threaten not onely the losse of our Governours, the decay of our trading, the slaughter of our men of warre, the extirpation of noble Families, and the funerall of private houses, but the very pulling downe, and destruction of our whole Kingdomes. Marvell not then hereafter, if God withhold the former and the latter raine in their seasons, if the earth become unsightly, by the filthinesse of the dust; if the haile do spill the vine; the whirle wind marre the olive; droughth dry up the springs; pestilent breathes corrupt the aire,

Matt. 23. 23.

I

and

and the sword cause our blood like water to runne downe the channels of our streetes, these are but the fruits of our forenamed sinnes, these things we may expect; though the light of justice hath been eclipsed with his long forbearance, it is not extinguished. If we crush him with our sinnes, as a cart is loaden with sheaves, wee may well thinke hee will disburden himselfe, and cast the load of our rebellions upon the ground of confusion, and desolation.

Object.

Ier. 8. 8.

Ier. 48. 14.

Answer.

God doth not threaten us with desolation, for *Wee are wise, and the Law of the Lord is with us.* Neither doe wee feare ruine, though enemies should invade us, for *We are mighty, and strong for the warre.*

Indeed these are great priviledges, and glorious prerogatives, yet none of these will keepe off the blow, or free from punishment, where it may be said of the Nation, as it were of Judah, they are a sinfull people, and laden with iniquity; yea though the place be as a signet on Gods finger, and as deare as the apple

ments, they have not knowne them.

5 Theirs was the service of God, even the ceremoniall worship, which was most beautifull, others knew there were a God to be served, but how they knew not, and so fell into foule and grosse Idolatry.

6 They had the promises, for they were entailed to them, and their children, and that so, as that whosoever would come to God, must come by their meanes.

7 Theirs was the Fathers, and of them Christ came: A famous people, a glorious Church: yet of these God saith, hee will doe to them as hee did to *Shilo*, even cast them out of his sight, as hee had cast out their brethren, the whole seede of *Ephraim*: nay hee doth not onely iterate, but treble his threatning, *I will overturne, overturne, overturne*; meaning, that as head and taile, root and branch should taste of his displeasure: so he would not so plague her, as that shee should be able to stand upon her pillars, with the want of raine,

Ier. 7. 11, 12,
13, 14.

Ezek. 21. 27.

as *Samaria*, in the dayes of *Ahab*, with scarcity of bread, with siege of adversaries, or with the tyrannies, and exactions of her owne Kings and Governours: God looked at these as too light to be put into the ballance against her finnes, and therefore he will bring an utter subversion upon her. Oh beloved, if Gods wrath smoake against such eminent persons as these, may not other common and sinfull places tremble, for feare of his jealousie? If these escaped not, whom he loved so tenderly, why should they looke for favour extraordinary, who were never indeared in his affections. O rely not then too much upon outward things, lest like crackt staves they deceive you; and like broken reeds, they runne into your hands; for if you be wicked, God sees your finnes, for his eyes are in every place, beholding the evill, and the good, hee will not be oblivious of your prophanenesse, hee keepes a talley of all your vanities; for God hath sworne by the excellencie of *Iacob*, that hee will never

Prov. 15. 3.

Amos 8. 7.

never forget any of your workes. Hee intends punishment, however for the present hee delays it, for if his vine-yard bring forth wild grapes, hee tels you what he purpōseth to doe unto it; event to take away the hedge thereof, that it may be eaten up, and to breake downe the wall thereof, that it may be trodden downe: all your externall props shall not be able to support you, nor your strength and power able to sustaine you, hee will be unto you as a Lyon, and as a Leopard by the way will hee observe you, he will meet you as a Beare that is bereaved of her whelpes, & will rent the caule of your heart, and there will hee devoure you like a Lyon, and the wild beasts shall teare you. Its true beloved as you say, we have the Law of God, nay wee have the Gospel too, but what are wee the better to have *Moses*, and the Prophets, if wee do not heare them, or the Ministry of Christ, and his Apostles, if wee will not be guided and directed by them? these will but adde to our calamities, for if

Isay 5. 5.

Hos. 13. 7, 8.

Corazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, in respect of the meanes, be lifted up to Heaven, if like Ioseph, they be not a fruitfull bough, they shall be cut off, and throwne downe to Hell, therefore blessed are they that heare the word, and do it, for such shall be justified before God. The Jewes were Israelites, I grant, wee are more, for wee are Christians, though the lives of many of us resemble the lives of heathens: VVee are Gods people as well as they, let us not follow their courses, lest wee fall into their snares, they had the glory, the covenants, the service, and the promises, and wee have all these too. They are but Talents committed to our trust for use: If we imploy them no better than they did, they will be taken from us: The Fathers were theirs by the right of the flesh; but they are ours by the right of faith: Let us credit our Ancestours by our piety, not shame them by our ungodly conversations; Was Israel amongst all the trees, the vine that God had set his heart upon, and

and have not wee beene the like?
Amongst all the Princes, had not
they a *Debora*, a *David*, and a *Solo-*
mon? and have not wee, through
Gods providence, enjoyed the like
gracious governours? Amongst all
the Prophets, had not they the re-
verend *Elisha*? and have not wee
ever still many grave, learned, and
godly teachers, who as the chariots,
and horsemen of Israel, drive us,
and put us on our duty by their
exhortations, and carry us to Christ
in their zealous and fervent prayers?
Have we not amongst all the seed-
plots, and Seminaries of good
learning their famous *Natothes*,
amongst all Lands the land of
Canaan, flowing with milke and
honey, in respect of its fertility:
and amongst all Cities, London,
even resembling Hierusalem, a visi-
on of peace? long may it keepe at
unity within it selfe. Thus you see I
have yeelded that we have as much,
if not more, than the Jewes had; yet
I must tell you that those are not
a sufficient fence to keepe out wrath,
these will prove so farre from kee-
ping

ping off the Lords displeasure, if we continue to make a progresse in the evill of our wayes, that they will pull it downe, and that speedily, upon our heads: a man is more offended with the ill behaviour of a servant, that hath beene advanced by him, than by the stubborne carriage of one that never received any favour from him. Whereas you say, you are wise, mighty, and strong for the warre; where are wise Senators, but in well settled Kingdomes? and where do wee find expert Warriours, strength of Armes, and warlike engines, but in populous and flourishing Nations? yet you see, that such as these, God threatens to pull downe, to plucke up, and to destroy.

First, for wisdom, as a wise man foresees the evill to prevent it, so I confesse, that wisdom is sometimes better than strength: for a wise man scaleth the City of the mighty, and casteth downe the strength of the confidence thereof. It is true also that Solomon saith, Scornefull men bring a City into a snare, or set it on fire, as
some

Prov. 21. 22.

Prov. 29. 8.

Sometimes did the inhabitants of Sodome; yea God for their sakes, layes his snares, and casts out his balls of fire, that he may take them, and taking them, destroy them.

But wise men turne away wrath: the wrath of God by their prayers, and the wrath of man by their prudence conjoynd with mildnesse, and affability. For, a soft answer pacifieth wrath, but euill words stirre up contention: yet beloved, though these be maine props, and espectrall ornaments in a common-wealth, yet God hath wayes to prevent these, and notwithstanding all our policie to let in the waters of justice for our confusion.

Prov. 15. 1.

First, *There is no wisdom, no understanding, no counsell against the Lord:* for when Nations are like unto ripe figges, fit to be pulled downe, and God hath determined to bring misery upon them, all the wit, policies, and deepe reaches of mortall man are not able to prevent it.

Prov. 21. 30.

Secondly, he can come so secretly, and suddenly with his judgments,

ments,

Isay. 19. 11, 12.

ments, that the very wise shall not see them, untill they be upon them:

Surely the Princes of Zoan are fooles; the counsell of the wise counsellors of Pharaoh, is become brutish: how say yee unto Pharaoh, I am the sonne of the wise, the sonne of ancient Kings; where are they, where are thy wise men? let them tell thee now, and let them know what the Lord of Hosts hath purposed to bring upon Egypt.

Isay 19. 13.

Thirdly, men may be wise, and great Politicians, yet pitching upon a wrong course think they do well, deceiving themselves, and seducing others: *The Princes of Zoan are become fooles, the Princes of Noph are deceived, they have also seduced Egypt, even they that are the stay, or the Governours of the Tribes thereof.*

Psal. 5. 12.

Fourthly, though they take the right course, yet they may breake it off, and so fall upon another way, expose themselves and others unto wofull ruines, for men do not alwayes by their owne counsels, but they sometimes fall by falling from their counsels.

Fiftly, though they be very wise,
and

and able to fore-see, and prevent any danger; yet God can suddenly turne their wisdom into folly, for *what have they that they have not received?* If God take away their wisdom, hee takes but his owne: if he doe infatuate them, it is but as a punishment of their, and other mens finnes to make way for wrath; *Mischiefe shall come upon mischief, and rumor upon rumor, then shall they seeke a vision of the Prophet, but the Law shall perish from the Priests, and counsell from the Ancients.*

Ezek. 7. 16.

Sixthly, when wise mens hearts are not firmly set upon God, and their policies wholly directed to his glory, its no great matter for Sathan to perswade them to turne from King and Country, and close with an open enemy. Did not *David* finde his *Achitophel* amongst the conspirators, when hee desired the Lord to turne his counsell into folly? So that now you see humane policie is no lett to Gods justice, neither can be any stop when God intends to come against *Idumea*, the people of his curses.

2 Sam. 15. 31.

Secondly,

2 Chron. 32. 8.

Psal. 60. 12.

Prov. 21. 31.

Ecclef. 9. 11.

2 Chron. 14. 11.

Secondly, for strength and warlike munition, whether by sea or land, or both, what is it? surely, as *Hezekiah* said concerning the forces of *Afflyria*, *It is but the arme of flesh*: and cursed is hee that resteth on the arme of flesh, and putteth not his trust in the Lord his God. Though these be speciall helpes, fit to be provided, and alwaies in readinesse to withstand an enemy, yet wee must rely on the strength of God, not on these, it is only through him that wee should doe valiantly; hee it is that shall tread downe our enemies. *The horse is prepared for the day of battell, but salvation is of the Lord.*

First, doth not *Solomon* tell us, that *the race is not to the swift, nor the battell to the strong*. God can save with a few, and with them that have no power, as well as with a strong and potent multitude. If God goe before *Israel* into the land of *Promise*, though the *Moabites*, the *Ammonites*, and all the *Heathens* rise up in armes against them, hee can make five of his people chase an

an hundred, and an hundred so put
tenne thousand of their enemies to
flight, and so cause them to fall be-
fore them by the sword.

Secondly, God can cause the
spirits of a strong army to faile,
that they shall not dare to venture
on a small company, making them
tremulous, & fearefull, ready to bow
and buckle with the smallest blast.
Thus hee dealt with Babylon; and
sometimes to this hee addes infatu-
ation, turning their wisdome, and
war like policy into folly, and thus
hee dealt with *Julian* in his Persian
expedition, when hee burnt his
ships to put a necessity of courage
in his souldiers, leaving them by
that meanes destitute of necessary
reliefe.

Thirdly, God can without Armes,
and strength of men, overcome, and
subdue a mighty Hoast, even with
other of his creatures: *Joshuahs* ene-
mies were slaine with haile: by the
blowing of rams-hornes, the walls
of Jericho were throwne downe:
the *Moghit* were overthrowne by
occasion of the sunne shining upon
the

Levit. 26. 8.

Isa. 13. 7, 8.

Isay 19. 1, 2, 3.
14, 17.

Theodoret. Hist.
lib. 3. cap. 20.

Josh. 11. 11.
a King. 8. 22, 23

*Augst. de ciuit.
Des. lib. 5. cap. 26.*

the water. The Christian Armies under *Theodosius*, against *Eugenius* the Tyrant, were defended by winds from Heaven, which snatched away the weapons out of their adversaries hand.

Ier. 48. 15.

Fouthly, was not *Moab* mighty, and had shee not men that were strong & fit for the warre; yet doth not the King, whose name is the Lord of Hosts, say, *Moab is spoyled and gone out of her Cities, & her chosen young men, or the choyce and chiefe of her young men, are gone downe to the slaughter?* And thus doth God threaten *Tyrus*, that his people shall fall by the sword, and his strong garrisons shall goe downe to the ground; for as no weapon that is formed against the Lord shall prosper: so be the people never so mighty, never so well armed, and strongly fortified; if God be not with them, but against them, they shall undoubtedly come to ruine. Well now (beloved) you see that neither wisdom, nor strength, are to be rested in, for there is no King saved by the multitude of his Hosts, neither

neither is a mighty man delivered by much strength, and a Horse is a vaine thing for safety; Alasse, though the creatures be good in themselves, yet in respect of us, they are but empty vials, unlesse the Lord be pleased by them to powre out some good upon us: Let us now say, as *Israel* said, In vaine is saluation hoped for from the hills, and expected from the mountaines, *Assur* shall not save us, wee will not ride upon horses, neither will we say any more to the worke of our hands, Yee are our gods; Take thou away all iniquity, receive us graciously, so will we offer the calves of our lips: And we have cause to say thus, for God hath as much matter against us as against any; for should hee search our Kingdome with a Candle Light, as sometime he did *Ierusalem*, the sight of our manifold transgressions would so provoke him, that wee should soone heare him, even from heaven, threatning to pull downe, to plucke up, and to destroy our whole Nation. This may awake every soule of us out of the

K sleepe

Ier. 3. 23.

Hos. 14. 2, 3.

2 Kings 22. 19.

2 Chro. 20. 2, 3.

2 Chro. 20. 12.
13.

sleepe of security: If God by a
 tempest menace death to the barba-
 rous Mariners, doe they sit still?
 Nay, they worke, and toyle, and
 pray too, for the saving of their
 lives: They are past sleeping whilest
 the storme is up, and the sea raging;
 when *Iosiah* heard the Booke of the
 Law, and God therein threatening
 his people with desolation and a
 curse, he made not light of it, but
 rent his cloathes, and wept before
 the Lord: when *Iehoshaphat* was told
 there was a great multitude com-
 ming against him, and that they
 were so neare, as *Hazazon-Tamar*,
 which is *Engedi*, he feared, and set
 himselfe to seeke the Lord; He did
 not trifle out his time, but presently
 fell to fasting and prayer, and in the
 behalfe of his Subjects as well as
 himselfe, cryed out, and that with
 earnestnesse: O our God, wilt thou not
 judge them? for wee have no might a-
 gainst this great company, that cometh
 against us, neither know we what to doe,
 but our eyes are upon thee; yea, at that
 message of the enemies approach,
 All *Judah* stood before the Lord, with
 their

their little ones, their wives, and their children. Oh the sluggishnesse, nay, the deadnesse of our hearts! the Trumpet sounds, the Drumme strikes up, and Gods Ministers cry vengeance in our eares, and yet wee arise not to looke out for the prevention of danger to our owne soules; God is ready to wound us, with the wound of an Enemy, and with the chastisement of a cruell one, for the multitude of our iniquities, and because our sinnes are increased, and yet we goe not forth to make anatonement for our soules: what doe wee thinke our dayes shall be prolonged, the Vision shall fall, and our damnation shall sleepe for ever: surely wee conceive that though God threaten, hee hath no intent to put his judgement into execution; O remember, I beseech you, that the Lord hath trodden downe all them that erre from his Statutes, and put away all the wicked of the earth like drosse, that you may tremble before him, and be afraid of his judgements: write that upon your doore-posts, nay,

PSL. 119. 118,
119, 120.

Amos 9.10.

Deut. 32. 32. 33.
&c.

upon the tables of your hearts, which *Amos* hath spoken concerning secure persons, viz. That the sinners in *Zion* shall die first, that say, the evill shall not overtake them, nor prevent them: Consider (beloved) our Vine is the Vine of *Sodome*, and of the fields of *Gomorrah*, our Grapes of Gall, and their Clusters are bitter, our wine is the poyson of Dragons, and the cruell venome of Aspes. Are not those which are our sinnes, laid up in store with God, and sealed up amongst his Treasures? his threatnings tell us that recompence and vengeance belongs unto him; we may expect that our feete should slide, that our day of calamitie is at hand, and that the evils that shall come upon us make haste; yea, and wee may well feare, that they will prove dangerous and grievous calamities; for as sinne is a make-bate? so our sinnes have caused God to withdraw the light of his countenance from us, and can we expect favour when God is in displeasure, notwithstanding all meanes and helpes to sanctificati-
on,

on, have we not broke our wildly, and violently into Rebellion? and can wee escape a burthen, having beene a valley of vision? have wee not a great deale of knowledge, even knowing the judgement of God, that they which doe such things, as our selves are guilty of, are worthy of death, and yet not onely doe the same, but take pleasure in them that doe them; were we ignorant, wee should have some stripes; but sinning against knowledge wee may expect many, and that heavy stroakes too; was our spot, the spot of his children, wee should not then so much neede to feare his indignation, but having corrupted our selves, and being a perverse and a crooked generation, wee may well thinke that hee will lay load upon us: But let us, now, whilst it is called to day, be advised to observe his threatnings, and humble our soules: Though our wound be grievous, yet it may be it is not incurable; it may be we shall yet get it bound up, and obtaine some healing medicines: Its true, the Lord,

Esay 22. 1.

Rom. 32. 1.

Luke 12. 47, 48.

you see threatens to pull downe, to plucke up, and to destroy whole Nations, and whole Kingdomes; yet the threatenning here is not absolute but conditionall; It may be the decree is gone forth, and the same sentence passed against us, yet hope that it is in the same manner, that it was against *Israel*, fly to God, not from God: flye from evil as farre as thou canst, cleanse thy heart, reforme thy life, amend thy manners, cry mightily, and multiply thy prayers, though God be angry, he retaineth not his anger for ever; though sorrowes be eminent, and dangers at hand, Justice hanging but by a twine thread, yet it may be stayed, for God stayes his stroakes in execution of our submission, he is not hasty to give the blow, he desires our Conversions, not our destructions, therefore hee waites yet, that he may be gracious; and for thy encouragement, he tells thee, that if thou wilt repent, he will repent; if thou wilt returne from thy evil, he will repent of the evil he said he would doe unto thee.

PART

PART II.

Verse 8. *If that Nation against whom
I have pronounced, turne from their
evill, I will repent of the evill that I
thought to doe unto them.*

THe former Verse had *E-
saus* hands, a harsh speech,
a sterne countenance, and
a strong tempest of
words; but here is *Jacobs* voyce, faire
gales, a smooth sea, and an abun-
dance of mercy. It is not the fairest
and the calmest day that purifieth
the ayre, but thundrings, lightnings,
and blustering, stormy windes :
Sweet potions seldome purge, espe-
cially tough humors; they are Cor-
rasives, not healing plaisters that
cure many sores. God threatens
Judah, toucheth her to the quicke,
and as it were, makes the blood

Chap. I.

Observation.

Lev. 26. 18, 21,
24, 28.

*Curare nos vult
castigationibus
suis Dominus,
sed curam reme-
dia non sequuntur.
Salvia. de Gu-
ber. Dei, lib. 7.*

Reason I.

spring out at the veines, that so hee may bring her to repent her of her sinnes.

God intends our good in the judgements that he pronounceth against us. They are but his Carpenters axe to hew off the knots, and square the timber of our soules; They are but his Masons hammers, to breake & polish our stonie and Adamantine hearts: and like these, methinks, hee multiplies his stroaks to make us buckle. Chirur-gions by their incisions intend the recovery, not the destruction of their diseased patients; Parents by their frowning lookes and angry words flay the child from his wilde tricks; it is his amendment, not his discouragement that runnes in their thoughts. So God by saying, hee will plucke up, pull downe, and destroy whole Kingdomes, seekes but to bring them backe from the evill of their wayes.

First, God sets his menaces as his Looking-glasse before the face of Israel, that shee may see the multitude of her sinnes, and the grievousnesse of her transgressions; shee would

would not hearken to his mandates; he doth but now admonish her by his threats: she would not be allured by his promises; he now drawes her homeward, shewing her, her sinfulness by the evill that he saith he will bring upon her: Had she beene humble, hee would have cherished her with his favours, but because she is sturdie, hee instructeth her with his threats. If God withhold the Showers, and keepe away the latter Raine, as it is for idolatry, so it is that *Judah* may lift up her eyes unto the high places; and see, where she hath not beene lien with: Shee was so whorish, that in the way shee sat for them, as the Arabian in the Wildernesse, and polluted them with her whoredomes, and with her wickednesse. The Nobles of *Israel* had forgotten why evill was brought upon their Fathers; neither did they see for what cause more wrath was comming upon themselves; but God by *Nehemiah* sets the hand of the judgement against the particular sinne, pointing out to them the profanation of the Sabbath day. If
 wrath

*Qui jubentur ver-
 ba non audiunt,
 ferientur verbera-
 bus admonentur.*
Gregor. Moral.
lib. 2. cap. 27.

Ier. 32. 3.

*Nehem. 13. 17.
 18.*

2 Chron. 32, 29,
26

*Hinc non egredi-
entur; O iaculum
in corde! durum
ad carcerem,
& culpa memo-
ria pulsat ani-
mum, Greg. in
Ezech. Hom. 21.*

*Non occiduntur,
ex foveis peccati
excitantur: con-
scientiam illorum
expergefecit Da-
us. Nullus est
misericor quam is
qui peccati mu-
rone vulnerat
conscientiam.
Ambros.*

Reason 2.

wrath be upon *Hezekiah*, upon *Ierusalem*, as it is for unthankful-
nesse, so it is that his ingratitude
may be displayed before him, ha-
ving not rendred againe according
to the benefit done unto him.
Thus you see that the Schoole of
the Crosse is the Schoole of light.
When *Ioseph* threatens his brethren,
keepest them in hold, and swears by
the life of *Pharaoh* that they shall
not depart out of *Egypt*, it strikes as
a dagger to their hearts, rubs up
their memory, and blowes up their
sinne of cruelty towards him, and
makes them acknowledge that for
that offence, their distresse was
come upon them. Thus you see
they being bound in fetters, and
holden in the cords of affliction,
God sheweth them their worke, and
their transgressions, that they had
exceeded: *Iob* 36. 8, 9. O the mercy
of God, that but threatens, when
there is cause to strike! O the power
of God, that by threatning can
bring the particular sinne, or sinnes
to the soules remembrance!

Secondly, God threatens that hee
may

may breake their hearts, that their
soules may bleede, and that their
spirits may become contrite for
their iniquities. Hence it is that his
Word, viz. his legall threatnings,
are compared to a Hammer that
breaketh the rocks in peeces, *Ier.*
23.29. For saith *Calvin*, as a Ham-
mer it beateth downe carnall and
evill affections. Some are woeed
and wrought upon by love, others
must be pulled out with feare; some
are perswaded with lenity, others
must be forced with severity; but
though God menace them, strike
them, and bring grieve upon them,
yet he intends in all their salvation:
were we of soft natures, God would
either spare us, or deale mildly with
us: but because obduracie, pride,
and contumacie are in our spirits,
that hee may make us yeeld, hee
speaketh roughly and sharply to
us. Thus God dealt with *Ephraim*,
and thereupon hee smoate upon his
thigh, and bemoaned himselfe be-
ing ashamed, yea even confounded
because of the reproach of his
youth: Gods sharpe language, was

Ephraim.

*Prænuſciat pec-
casoribus futura
ſupplicia, & cor-
da coram ſeſet &
concutit ut omen-
dentur vel conſe-
runtur, Pellican.*

*Multis amore,
multis & more cor-
recti ſunt, ſed per
tramorem timo-
ris, ad amorem
pervenierunt. In-
cuiſit penam, in-
gentis dolorem, ſed
querit ſalutem.
Aug. de temp.
ſer. 95.*

*Sunt qui molesti-
am quidem su-
perant, tamen
fractus proueniunt.
Chrysost. de
Laz. con. 3.*

*Hister. Animal.
lib. 4.*

Ephraims mercy, it tooke kindly, wrought effectually, tamed, and brought downe his stout stomacke, and so he became his deare and pleasant childe, *Ier.* 31. 19, 20. Some are not the better, but the worse for afflictions, not the softer, but the harder for comminations, like *Pharaoh*, and like *Nero* that cruell Tyrant, who threatned his *Ioue* for marring his musicke with a Thunder-clap, daring him to a single Combate; or like *Abaz*, when God troubles them, they transgresse more and more against the Lord, *2 Chron.* 28. 22. These are like those Beares in *Pliny*, that could not be stirred with any prickles, or like those fishes in *Aristotle*, that though they have speares thrust into their sides, yet they will not be awaked: thus not submitting, though God stretch out his hand against them; *Esay* 26. 11. they adde rebellion to their sinnes, *Iob* 34. 37. And rebellion is as the sinne of witchcraft, *1 Sam.* 15. 23. their soules are more secure, their spirits more proud, their avaritious desires more eager, and their
lusts

lusts more violent, they are so ob-
durate, that as these menacing Ar-
rowes pierce not, so they rebound
and recoile backe againe. The doore
of their hearts is so fast lockt, and so
strongly bolted, that Gods threat-
ning speeches can no way enter. It
is not thus with a broken heart, it
forthwith sees its rubbish, and is
ashamed to lift up its eyes to hea-
ven, *Ezra 9. 6.* with shame and con-
fusion of face, with bitter weepings,
& mournfull lamentations, yea with
sound judgings, and condemnati-
ons of its selfe, it falls downe before
the Lord. It doth not seeke by a
false plea of its owne righteousnessse
to free, acquit, and to cleare it selfe;
it weepes to see its basenesse, stands
agast beholding the filthy and the
muddy waters that have runne from
it, and cries out with *Simon Peter,*
Depart from me for I am a sinfull crea-
ture, Luke 5. 8. Its sorrow is now its
meate, it causeth its bed to swimme,
and watereth its couch with its salt
and brinish teares. The sword hath
pierced its skinne, and the blood
now springs from its veines. It is

now

*Quisquis in su-
perbiam mensum
elevat, quisquis
avaritia opibus
anhelet, quisquis
sollicitus iniqui-
tatis suis pollu-
is, coram offensa
causa veritatem
claudit, et non ad
se Dominus veni-
at, clausura ani-
mi suis viscerum
denudat. Greg. in
Evangel. Rom.
7.*

*Ita comparati
sicut a natura,
ut quicquid in eis
corpus videtur,
arumpit sanguis,
ita vultus a-
nima trahunt
luctum. La-
cryma est san-
guis animi. Pa-
uient. Tim 1.
lib. de mort.
pag. 213.*

*In lamentis sese
afficit, quia dum
malorum suorum
reges, pro his
perpeti supplicia
aeterna perti-
mescit. Greg.*

now grieved that it should be so mad, and vile, as to neglect any grace for a sins sake, or a worlds sake: Its now troubled that the Lord should shew more love unto it, and conferre more gifts upon it than others, and that it should decline, not answer his trust, and decay in his graces, not using, and imploying them to the best advantage. It now sees what made Satan an ugly fiend in hell, why God thunders out of the clouds against it, and what wo full miseries it is liable to, if God should be strict to marke its errors, and render to it according to its demerits. O how it is affected with sorrow! the remembrance of its fore-past life is dolorous; it now being broken up, goeth forth and weepes bitterly, crying with the poore Publican, *Lord be mercifull to me a sinner*. You know, if the Master mourne, all the servants are clad in blacke; now the heart hearing Gods threaten, descends from her Throne, grieves, and puts on sorrow as a garment, the head aches, the eyes droppe, the face is bedewed, and the whole man is troubled

troubled, for if a tender and a broken heart lead the way, like it all the rest of the members follow after: Like the King of *Nineveh*, if hee cloath himselfe with sackcloth, all his Nobles, all his servants, all the people; yea the beasts of the field lament with him: Before, the bleeding heart was like the mountaines exsiccate, and altogether voide of humidity, it did not frame its doings to turne unto its God, the spirit of whoredome was in the midst of it, and it did not know the Lord; now it fasts, prayes, weepes, and accuseth it selfe more than all the world besides: before, it was rockie, and through its hardnesse and impenitencie treasured up wrath, against the day of wrath, now it splits, melts, and dissolves at the voyce of God: before, like a franckie and madde person insensible of its hurt, it could alwayes laugh but never weepe; but now the case is altered, for its joy is turned into lamentation: before, the object of its griefe was worldly crosses; like unto the Church it hath now gotten the Moone under its

Hosea. 5. 4.

Rom. 2. 5.

Effects of a broken heart.

Psal. 51. 4.

Cant. 5. 8.

2 Sam. 24. 10.
17.

Acs. 16. 30.

Ephef. 2. 2.

Icr. 30. 21.

Isay 27. 9.

Indg. 10. 10.

its feete, it matters not of the sweete profits and pleasures of the world, the losse of these doth nothing move. It grieues that by its commission of evill, God is displeased, and by its neglect and omission of dutie Christ is offended: It is sinne, not punishment that it now respects; before, it lay in silence, now it is inquisitive after life and happinesse: before it adhered to the Prince of the ayre, that worketh effectually in the hearts of the children of disobedience; now it bindeth, obligeth, and engageth it selfe to God: before it could close with sinfull motions, prize them; and keepe them close, as its chiefest jewells; but now it endeavoureth to worke out every sinne: the soule is pierced with the darts of Gods threatnings, and the corrupt humors of iniquitie now gush out. For by this shall *Iacob* be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his sinne. Before, if ever it looked on sinne, it was in the grosse, now with *Israel* it tells God, it hath not onely sinned in forsaking God, but also

also in sewing *Baalim*: now with *David*, it conceales not its blood-guiltinesse, in slaying *Vriah* the *Hittite* with the edge of the sword: It doth not onely say, that it hath beene the abuser of mercies, the swearer, the drunkard, the whoremonger, and the covetous wretch, but with *Paul*, of sinners it will be the chiefe: Before it cared not how many it infected with its corrupt courses, now it is grieved for the superstitious wayes, and abominable courses of others, And rivers of waters runne downe its cheekes, when it sees men breake and transgresse the Law of God. These are the sequell of a broken heart, and this is that, that God aimes at in threatning the Land of *Judah*.

Delosus versatur in generalibus.

Ezech. 9. 4.

Psal. 119. 136.

Oh grievous! must the heart be broken: the very breaking of the string thereof will hasten death, I cannot see how the breaking thereof will make for the good of the soule.

Object.

Were not the sacrifices in the time of the Law first cut in pieces before they were consumed with

Ans.
The necessity of a broken heart.

L

fire

Psal. 51. 17.

fire from heaven in token of their acceptance; the heart is the oblation, it must be rent, it must be split: *For the Sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart the Lord will not despise.*

Secondly, I confesse it is gracious, and puts the soule to abundance of paine, yea, so much, that as *Zipporah* said to *Moses* when her sonne was circumcised, *Oh bloody husband!* so the soule in its anguish may cry out; *Oh bitter! Oh terrible! Oh cruell!* but though like that in a woman in travell, this sorrow of heart be tart, and bitter, yet it is not desperate, it tends to a birth, and even in it, the soule may conceive hope of deliverance: Thus was the Church, like a woman with childe drawing neare the time of her delivery, crying out in her pangs before the Lord.

Esay 26. 17.

3 Vessells must be gaged before the liquor can come forth, swelling ulcers must be broken before they can be cured, and the sword extracted and drawne out of the wound, before the healing plaister, can mitigate

tigate the smart, ease the paine, and heale the same. Our hearts are vessels full of sinne, like barrells they have their bungs layd close downe; God doth but gage them, that iniquity may runne forth, and so that they may be emptied of corrupt affections. It is sinne that hath puffed up, and swollen our spirits, God doth but breake them, that the festred, and filthy matter of ungodlinesse may have a vent, that so by applying spirituall balme, he may the sooner heale our sores. Sinne is the sword wherewith Satan hath wounded us; it is not yet drawne backe, God by threatning doth but pull it out, when it is once forth, hee will play the Chirurgeon, and perfectly cure us.

It is true in nature, that when the heart-strings breake, the vitalls presently decay: but if God breake thy heart with sorrow for sinne; thou needst not feare death, for that breaking is the beginning of spirituall life, if any thing die, it is sinne, for God by his menaces intends only, a deadly and mortiferous

blow to thy base corruptions: And put case it should bring thee neare unto the very gates of death, that thou shouldst swell and frownd again, there being in appearance scarce a haire's breadth betwixt thy soule and the grave, yet God will revive thee, raise thee up, and cause thee to live in his sight: For though he be the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy, as he dwells in the high, and holy place, so also with him that is of a contrite and an humble spirit, to refresh the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite one.

Hos. 6. 2.

Ezay 57. 15.

That is not true sorrow that is grounded upon the feare of judgement, that is servill, not filiall.

Object.

For we must feare the King, and his goodnesse, and his mercies like a soft fire must melt our hearts, so that wee doubt whether our griefe for sinne being wrought by threatnings of wrath will hold water, when it comes to the triall.

Answ.

Brokenesse of
heart twofold.

It is true, there is a twofold brokenesse of heart, one Legall, the other

other Evangelicall; and both these may be produced by Gods threatenings against our soules. For the first, if *Paul* preach of judgement, *Felix* trembles, *Mat. 23*. Carnall men, when God brings losses upon their estates, takes away their friends and children, or layeth continued diseases upon their bodies, will mourne, and tell us that these things come upon them for their sinnes: these things are many times as the flashings of hell fire in the face of their soules, and their guilty consciences apprehend them, as forerunners of greater miseries; hereupon they sigh, weepe, and wring their hands; but alas all this is but out of selfe love, as they are apprehensive of nothing but wrath, they are fearfull lest they should make up the number of the damned in hell. Thus it is not sinne, but misery, that disturbes their spirits, not God offended, but onely punishment feared; that brings palenesse into their faces, trembling into their knees, and grieve into their soules. This is extorted: onely terrours make

Legall broken.
ness of spirit.

Iob. 18. 11.

him afraid on every side, and drive him to his feet, it is not for the root, but for the fruits and effects of his sinne. Like a rush now in a storme, he hangs downe his head, let God but alter the weather, and allay the tempest, hee will presently perke up in his sinfull wayes, a little carnall joy will eate out his griefe, as the morning dew when the Sunne ariseth, it will quickly vanish away: This breaking doth not let out the corrupt streames of his vitious courses, and so empty him of his sinne: it onely curbes the insolencie of his proud lusts: it doth somewhat restraîne them, it doth no way waste them: they are not killed with this blow, they doe but lye close for a season. Beloved, if the majestie of the word over-shadowing your soules, your present troubles or your imminent dangers worke onely fretting motions in your heart, however you may seeme to be broken, yet in this your breaking there is little comfort to your soules.

Secondly,

Secondly, sorrows may proceed even from threatenings, and be Evangelicall, but then the soule, like the child, apprehends it his fathers threatening, not onely to make him grieve for his offences, but also to prevent a sore and severe whipping for the time to come. The sanctified soule, when God menaceth, sees that its finnes are the clouds which hide his face, that they, and they onely shut the doore, draw the curtaines, cause the eclipse, and make the wall of separation between God and it; but here it rests not; for should it now set downe its staffe, it would despaine. It considers that God might as well destroy it, as menace it; damne it, as threaten it: hereupon it conceives that though Gods threatening be a sharpe, and a dreadfull voyce, yet God speakes so to it, not meerly to affright it, but thoroughly to awake it, that forthwith it may humble it selfe, seeke his face, and turne from the evill of its doings; yea, beloved, it yet goeth further, and ascends one step higher, saye: g

Evangelical bro-
kenesse of spi-
rit, wrought by
threatnings.

thus with it selfe. It is true, God threatens mee, my sinns have given him too much cause so to doe, for they have deserved perdition, and call for no lesse than perpetuall ruine, it is his mercy that I am not consumed, and because his compassions faile not, that I am not cut off; yet in this his threatning, I apprehend the very bowels of pity yerning within him for mee; for though justice would make mee forthwith a president of wrath, yet mercy hath perswaded him to threaten mee for my amendment, that I may not be condemned with the world; my sinne provokes him to menace mee, his threatning is but conditionall, his love to my soule moves him to tell mee what I have deserved, that by repentance it may be prevented by mee. Thus the soule apprehends threatnings effects of mercy, not of divine fury, as a pedagogue to leade him to, not as a sterne porter to keep him from Christ. Now as the soule is taken off from worldly vanities, so it begins to grow warme, and to be heated

*Amor est calor quia
monstrum accendit,
quam replet, Ore-
gor. mor. 16. cap.
30.*

heated with the love of God, it
tramples upon its former finnes, it
is elevated, and seekes the things
that are above. Before punishment,
not sinne, was the cause of its feare,
like the slave it lookt at the whip,
not its sloath: before it kept a loofe
off from God, now it approacheth,
and draweth neere to God, it appre-
hends the vertue of the Lordstone
in its comminations, even an at-
tractive power to draw it into the
Lords presence; nay, its heart is so
tender, like the heart of *Iosiah*, that
it is willing to enter into covenant
with God, to follow the counsell
of the most High, and the advise of
them that tremble at his word. He
feares lest hee should come short of
eternall and everlasting rest: and
therefore, as hee resolves, so hee en-
deavours, to serve God with reve-
rence and holy feare. What God
requires, hee would have done, not
to the halves, but faithfully, and
with a perfect heart. As there is
mercy with the Lord that hee may
be feared, so now the ground of
his love is the justice, but the
ground

*Machina mundi
est vis amoris, qua
dum a mundo ex-
trahit, in alia su-
stollit. Greg. mor.
6. cap. 27.*

Ezra. 10. 3.

Heb. 4. 1.

Heb. 12. 28.

2 Chron. 19. 9.

Psal. 130. 4.

*Bernard. in Cons.
serm. 83.*

Aug. 8.

ground of his feare; the mercy of Almighty God: for as all feare is servile, if it flow not from love; so honour and reverence, which springeth not from this roote, is no better than fawning and formall flattery. Neither hath hee onely an awfull reverence of his Majestie; fearing him as a father out of a child-like disposition, but hee is fearfull lest hee should decline, and therefore the desires of his heart are more and more to feare his name. The adultresse loves her lust, wishes the absence, and feares the presence of her husband: but this soule hates its sinne, feares the absence, and longs for the presence of its God; yea it endeavours to stirre up its affections more and more, to keepe close unto him, avoyding all things that may steale away, or at least alienate the heart from him, *Iosb. 23.*
 11. Now the soule reflecting upon it selfe, bewailes its owne wretchednesse, saying, Oh, how ignorant, and what a beast have I beene before him! Oh how wretchedly, notwithstanding all his mercies have

have I departed from him? Hee
hath called mee, I have refused to
answer: hee hath reprov'd mee, I
have proceeded from evill to
worse; and yet to let mee see how
loath hee is to cast mee into that
bottomlesse lake, hee now but
threatens mee; Oh the patience!
Oh the forbearance! Oh the riches
of the goodnesse of this my graci-
ous God, it is his mercy riding in
her triumphant Chariot, that stops
fierce justice in the way, and bids
her onely menace mee, not strike
mee; had shee beene absent, or with-
drawne bet selfe, instead of being
threatned, I had now beene sent
packing to hell: Oh base creature!
Oh vild varlet that I am thus to
stirre up, and vex so kinde, so lo-
ving, and so affectionate a father!
Well, now I see hee would gladly
have mee doe well, hee is unwilling
to destroy mee, and desirous to save
mee in the day of wrath. What,
shall I againe grieve him with my
sinnes? Shall I againe walke stub-
bornely, and rebelliously before
him? no, no, my very heart bleeds
to

to thinke of my former evill wayes, whereby I have grieved him, and provoked the eyes of his glory; his long suffering shall not now be in vaine, I will seeke to honour him, set forth his praises, and magnifie his Name. Hee but chides mee, because hee loves mee he but threatens mee to amend mee, what shall I render to his Majestie, even for this particular? I will take unto mee words, and turne unto him, I will strive to behave my selfe as a dutifull and obedient child before him, yea I will labour that the fruits of these his terrible, yet loving menaces, may be the lively effects of repentance in my soule. Oh beloved, if your hearts be thus broken with the apprehension of mercy in the threatning of judgement; feare not, your sorrow will endure the touchstone, and your grieve will prove current when it comes to the tryall.

Thirdly, God having by these dreadful thunderclaps rent the heart, hee yet threatens to extract and draw forth serious, and sincere confessions

essions for the bleeding soule, frō as with the heart man must beleeeve to righteoufnesse, so with the tongue must he make confession to saluati-

Rom. 10. 10.

on. Was not this that which God expected from *Iudab*, when hee told her hee was angry with her? Did hee not immediately upon his denouncing judgement against her, bid her acknowledge her iniquity, whereby shee had transgressed against the Lord her God: It was for no other end that God said, hee would be as a Lyon to *Ephraim*, but that shee might plead guilty, and confesse her offence before him.

Ier. 3. 22, 23.

And no marvell if God require this upon the comminations of his justice for our accusation of our selves, in confessing transgression, and our unworthinesse of pardon makes much for the honour of his great Name. Hence it was that *Ioshua* said to *Achan*, when the wedge of gold, and the Babylonish garment was found with him:

Hos. 5. 1 & 2, 5.

Bis Deum laudamus ubi nos pie accusamus, confitemur de prateritis peccatis, &c.
Gregor. in Psal. penit.

My sonne, give I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him, and tell mee now what thou

God is glorified by our confession of sinne.

A.C. 19. 17. 18.

A.C. 2. 36. 37.

1 In his crucifix.

thou hast done, Iosh. 7. 19. And thus
 saith the Holy Ghost, was the
 Lord Jesus magnified by them that
 beleaved, when they came and con-
 fessed, shewing their deeds; Doe we
 not hereby give him the praise of
 his truth, acknowledging all things
 to be true that by him are laid to
 the charge of our soules? When
 Peter told the Jewes, that *that Iesus*
whom they had crucified, was both Lord
and Christ: they denyed not the ac-
 cusation, neither did they plead
 guiltinesse to the inditement, that
 was brought in against them, nay
 being pricked in their hearts they
 yeelded that they were guilty, and
 cryed out, *Men and brethren, what*
shall wee doe? As if they should
 have said: Oh Peter thou hast this
 day laid wilfull murder to our
 charge, wee cannot, neither dare
 wee answer thee by way of negati-
 on, wee are the men that have im-
 brued our hands in his innocent
 blood, wee have crucified him, we
 have put him to death: thy word
 surely, is the Word of God, it hath
 come close to our consciences, and
 like

like a two-edged sword, made deepe gashes in our sinfull soules. Oh now *Peter*, and you the rest of the Apostles, tell us what course we cruell murderers and bloody creatures shall take to escape the damnation of hell, having thus villanously, and wickedly slaine the onely begotten sonne of God. *David* when the Lord told him, that the sword should not depart from his house for murdering *Uriah*, and committing adultery with *Bershebab*, crying out, *Against thee, thee onely have I sinned, and done this evill in thy sight*, justified God in his speeches, and cleared him of injustice in the way of his judgements. Thus did *Nehemiah*, saying, *Thou art just in all that is brought upon us: for thou hast done right, but wee have done wickedly*. As if they should have said, Lord hadst thou not been propitious, hel-torments had beene the portion of our soules. Doe not our confessions tend to the glory of his wisdom, when as by ripping up our particular sinnes, wee acknowledge that all things are naked before him

2 In his justice.

Psal. 51. 4.

Nehem. 9. 33.

*Si juxta merita
nostra nos trahat
in aeternum nos
damnaret.*

3 In his wisdom.

*Totus oculus est
ipse Deus. Aug.*

4 In his pati-
ence and power.

him, and that our very secret offences are not concealed from him. Hee made the eye, and hee must needs see; hee is all eye, and what is it then that is hidden from him? Moreover, doe we not give him the praise of his patience, and glory of his power, by the submisse acknowledgement of our particular offences, upon his immediate threatnings? not onely confessing that whereas hee forbears us, hee might presently hang us up in chaines as presidents for terror unto others, by the executing of martiall law upon us: but also by prostrating our selves at his teete, being content to undergoe what hee pleaseth; and so long as it is, or shall stand with his will to let it lye upon us.

1 Pet. 5. 6.

Judg. 13. 18.

This is to humble our selves under the mighty hand of God. Thus did Israel when shee told him shee had sinned, and bad him doe unto her whatsoever seemed good in his sight. Thus did *Ely*, when *Samuel* brought him that dolefull message, concerning the extirpation of his familie.

familie, when hee sayd; *It is the Lord, let him doe what seemeth him good.* And thus did the sweet singer of Israel, when his unnaturall Absalom sought to take away his crown and diadem, saying, *If the Lord say, I have no delight in thee: behold, here am I, let him doe to mee as seemeth good unto him.* Beloved, doth mans confession thus set forth the glory of his truth, the praise of his justice, the depth of his wisdom, and the greatnesse of his power, and can you thinke that God will lose this his glory? no, no, as Gods glory should be the Christians aime, and as hee will be honoured of all that come nigh unto him, so he will threaten, that by threatning his glory might be more apparent.

I Sam. 3. 18.

2 Sam. 15. 26.

Why have the Church, why have Nations, why have Kingdomes, when God hath pronounced evill against them, beene so frequent in submisse confessions?

Quest.

First, they have even apprehended this as the sole and onely meanes to prevent the execution of

Answer.

M

his

Iob 33. 27, 28.

Prov. 28. 13.

*Apud aures Dei
vox valida, devo-
ta confessio, Greg.
mor. 26. cap. 28.*

*Quantum displice-
ret Deo impuden-
tia peccatoris,
tantum placet ve-
recundia confiten-
tis, Bern. in Cant*

*Cum peccata no-
stra per lacrymas
confitemur, angus-
tam viam per quam
ingredimur, Greg.
in Ezek. hom. 16.*

his fierce displeasure, for he looketh upon men, and if any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited mee nor, hee will deliver his soule from going to the pit, and his life shall see the light. Hee hath tyed himselfe by promise to pardon them that confesse before him. Therefore as he saith, He that hideth his sinnes shall not prosper; so hee that confesse:h, and forsaketh them shall find mercy. Humble and devout confession is a prevailing voyce with the God of heaven. Hee is not so much vexed with our stubbornnesse in the way of sinne, but hee is as much pleased, when upon the beg- ding knees of our soules wee make confession of our sinnes. God was highly provoked with *Rehoboam*, and his people for forsaking him, and therefore hee sent *Shishbak* against them, but when they humbled themselves hee would not destroy them, but yeelded and granted deliverance to them: 2 *Chron.* 12. 5, 6, 7. This, this is the very entrance into the port of life, it obliterates the sinne, and buries transgression

gression in the grave of oblivion; yea Christ is an Advocate, not a Judge, to all who by their owne confession condemne themselves. For if wee judge our selves, we shall not be condemned with the world, 1 Cor. 11. 31. Its confession that prevents the racke, but sinnes concealment that brings death and damnation to the guilty soule. For even to this end God requireth confession, that hee may free us, being humble, and to this end condemnes them that cloake iniquity, that being proud, sturdie, and stomackesfull, wee may be punished by him: the sicke stomacke is eased by vomiting, and so is the loaden and burthened conscience by sins confession.

If *David* thus cast up his sweete morsels as gall, and wormwood, God will forgive the iniquity of his sinne, *Psal. 32. 3, 5.* If the prodigall penitentiall come to his father, and say, *I have sinned against heaven, and against thee,* he shall bee embraced, not rejected; kissed, not rebuked; and have a kind welcome, instead of a severe expulsion. Thus also is

*Illis non iudex,
sed advocatus est
Christus, qui se
propria confessione
damnavit. Cas-
siodor.*

fared with the Publican, who unbaring of his finnes, went justified away from the Lords presence. Confession is a healing plaister, Gods threatnings make their sores to smart, to mitigate their paine, and to ease their soules that confesse their finnes.

Secondly, when God menaceth, they are astender hearted, and affectionate children, who out of grieve to see their parents so displeased as to speake harshly and cuttingly to them, confesse their faults; Their hearts are full, their eyes water, and they cry shame against themselves. Fire you know must have a vent, it will breake forth, vehement affections cannot be kept close, they will out. The Church, when God threatens her; hath a sad spirit, laden with grieve, and full of sorrow; that that fills it, is the sight and sense of her sinne, in offending so loving and indulgent a father; and shee is so full, that shee cannot hold, shee cannot containe her selfe, her anguish sets her tongue on worke: for as out of the abundance of the heart
the

*Tribulatio spiri-
tus linguam com-
mouet, ut erratum
peccati operis vox
confessionis im-
pugnet. Gregor.
Mor. 8. cap. 15.*

the mouib speaketh, Matt. 12. 34. She out of the plenitude of her grieſe, by confeſſing of her finnes, and complaining of her ſelfe, powreth out her ſoule before the Lord: Her Floodgates have beene long ſet downe, they are now pluckt up, and the waters runne with full ſtreames; Though the Well be deepe, yet there is much water, and ſhe drawes it up by whole buckets full to powre out before the Lord: Now her ſorrow, like a River overflowing the banks, beares downe all before it, ſhe can take no joy, no comfort, no reſreſhing in any earthly things whatſoever. The ſervants ſmiles will not cheare the childe, when the Father frownes. Riches, honours, and preferments cannot raiſe up her drooping ſpirits; ſhe ſees by theſe ratlings in the clouds, and thunderbolts of Juſtice, that her God is provoked; ſhee hath grieved his ſpirit, and made him in ſtead of his banner of Love to hang out his red flagge of his ſore diſpleaſure before her: Shee mournes with *Rachel*, all the pleaſures of the world cannot

1 Sam. 7. 6.

raise her, now shee hath given distaste and discontent unto her good God : All her thoughts are which way she shall get him appeased, her sinne pardoned, and her bond cancelled; she doth not deny the debt, dissemble her guilt, and tell him shee hath not sinned, but is innocent before him; no, as shee is conscious, and as shee is sore grieved upon consideration of them, she is very forward, very ready, and wondrous willing to unbowell her selfe, and display her sinnes before him; nay, though her confessions are as warme blood springing out of her wounded and pierced heart; yet because she apprehends them to come out too slowly, but as it were droppe by droppe (as her offended God threatens) as if the darts of his menaces had not strucke deepe enough; she to shew her indignation, and to expresse her revenge, strikes too, and striking, cuts it with many expostulations: and to Gods present threatnings, she addes the whole wrath of God, telling it, that it is liable to every curse, and all
this

this is to make it gush out in a fluent manner.

Thirdly, as they apprehend comminations but earnest perswasions to confession of their sinnes, that God may thereby take occasion to doe good to their soules in remitting these sinnes, so they have ever found, that this is a speciall way to evidence their spirituall life, and an onely testimony of the sinceritie of the sorrow of their hearts for sinne. Menaces are Gods searching instruments, if he once thrust them into our wounds, and they bleed not, we feele not, and cry not out, it is a signe that we are but dead persons. As that is dead which is void of sense, so sensiblenesse of paine being a Symptome of life, so onely the living will lay it to heart, and goe into the house of mourning, not of feasting, when God denounceth judgement against them, *Ecles. 7.2.* For as the grave cannot praise him, death celebrate him, and they that goe downe to the pit, hope for his truth, so onely the living praise

M 4

him,

*Non vult ulcisci
malitia qui confitetur
peccata persuadet: Optat
salvare confitentes,
ne contumaces punire cogatur.
Augu.*

*Confessio, anima
victam indicat.
Bern. Ser. 2. de
Resurr.*

*Mortuum est
membrum quod
dolorum non sentit.
Idem.*

Iob. 22. 33.

him, by the acknowledgement of sinne before him : Neither doe they onely shew, that they are alive, not dead in sinne, but hereby also they declare to God and the world, that there is no darling sinne that they desire to hugge, no corruption that they are willing to foster; yea that there is no evill, which their soules doe not abhorre : selfe-love cannot abide to heare any thing spoken against it selfe, much lesse will it speake any thing to its owne disgrace, pride and selfe-love are extirpated out of their hearts. For they doe not cover their transgressions as *Adam*, nor hide their iniquities in their bosomes. Men commonly would seeme better than they are, they are loath their faults should be knowne, and they keepe them as close as they can. It is otherwise now with the Church, for as she abhorres and abominates her selfe, so she alledgeth no more against her soule, than all her accusers are able to lay to her charge. Hypocrites when they heare the sound of Gods dreadfull indignation

tion for the evill of their doings, yet make much of their filthy finnes; wickednesse is sweete in their mouthes, and they hide it under their tongues; they spare it, they forsake it not, they keepe it still within their mouthes: but the Church when God threatens, casts sinne as gall in her mouth, and spits it out, feeles corruption as indigested meate lying heavie upon her stomacke, and vomits it up, yea as a lumpe of leade her iniquities being upon her heart, she unburdens her soule, by the sincere confession of them. Hence it is that shee doth not conceale her particular finnes, 1 Sam. 12. 19. 1 Chro. 21. 17. Ezra 9. 10, 11, 12. Psal. 51. 14. For did she hide them God would not expresse his faithfulnessse in the forgivenessse of them. It is the unwrapping of the sore that makes way for the salve. For he that expects a healing plaister must unbare his wound. Shee doth not extenuate or lessen her offences, shee freely speakes of them, and that with the greatest aggravations shee can devise.

Ac. 26. 9, 10, 11

vise. Thus did *Paul* in the presence of *Agrippa*, when hee told him how that he thought he might doe many things contrary to the name of *Jesus of Nazareth*, how he shut many of the Saints in prison, giving consent unto their deaths, persecuting them to strange Cities, and compelling them even to blaspheme; yea, with him shee accounts her the chiefe of sinners, *1 Tim. 1. 15*. Shee doth not say, I have not done this evill which thou threatnest mee for, or, if I have done it, I have not evilly done it, if evilly, not very evilly, if very evilly, yet not with an evill intent. Shee remembers that whosoever shall breake one of the least Commandements, and shall teach men so, shall be the least in the Kingdome of heaven, *Matth. 5. 19*. Shee lookes into her smallest failings, and in her sight they are grievous sinnes: She doth not say with the Pharisee, I am not so bad as others, and in particular, this Publican; no, that she is but flesh and blood, and who sinnes not? as if, because sinne is common, it is not

not the worse: neither doth shee blame the Devill for her iniquity, as if he had forced and compelled her to the commission of the same. She knowes hee can but perswade, hee cannot enforce; His temptations would be nothing, if shee kept off consent. She doth not cover or colour them with faire pretexts, as *Saul* did his disobedience in not killing the *Amalekites*, and sparing the Sheepe and Oxen for sacrifice, *1 Sam. 15. 20, 21*. neither doth she lay them upon any but her selfe; *Adam* layed his sin upon his wife, & his wife, her sin upon the Serpent, and both in the end their sinne upon God, *Gen. 3. 12. 13*. The roote of this sinne is not pulled yet out of our loynes, we yet smell of it, as *Lot* did of the smoake of *Sodome*. Wee will have poore excuses, and base put-offs, before we will have none at all; if we dare not say God, hath done it, or God would have it so, wee will be sure to reach him by way of circumference; Are not the planets sometimes taxed? and sometimes, doth not destinie and blinde

*Grego. Moral. lib.
22. cap. 13.*

*August. in Psal.
31.*

blinde Fortune beare the blame of our evill deedes. But alas, these confessions are neither serious nor sincere: These in themselves are finnes, no testimonies of the conversion of our soules from sinne: These will noway ease us, but they will lay a heavy load of vengeance upon us: These are not free; if *Balaam* see the naked sword, he will cry, *I have sinned*; these are extorted by the pain of the racke, as *Pharaohs* was, it is not sense of sinne, but sense of wrath that brings us upon our knees: Neither in this doe we take the shame to our selves, and give the glory to God, *Rom. 6. 12. Luke 23. 40.* but basely, and wickedly, we goe about to lay the shame upon God, and take the glory unto our selves. O therefore let us imitate the Church, and follow the example of repentant Nations for the time to come; let us not forcedly, but freely, not by the halves, but fully, not hypocritically, but in the integritie of our hearts, confesse before the Lord, for by effecting this, through the threatning of his fearefull

*Sanaret te Deus
per indulgentiam
si fatereris; quæris
perquam excuses,
sed non quæris
ille, quem pro te
punit. August.
de tem. Serm. 66.*

full judgements he would doe good to us.

Seeing God intends our good, let us see whether his threatnings have wrought good upon our soules; unlesse we be starke blinde, we cannot say that he doth not menace us; but what are the fruits? what are the effects of them in our selves? By the Fathers frownes, as well as the Fathers stripes the child may take notice of his Fathers anger against his faults; by the least withdrawing of the light of the Lords countenance wee may see that he is displeased at us for our sinnes, but now he hath drawne his deadly arrowes, of Sword, and Pestilence to the head, wee may well conceive that hee is mightily provoked by some great and grosse evils that are committed by us. O the multitude of our sinnes, and the grievousnesse of our transgressions! our pride, our fulnesse of bread, and abundance of idlenesse knocketh for Justice; we have forsaken the guide of our youth, and forgotten the Covenant of our God: We have abu-
sed

Vse 1.

Pro. 2.17.

Rom. 2. 4, 5.

Ier. 2. 30.

Dan. 5. 18. *ad 29.*

Ioh. 3. 19. 20.

Rom. 1. 18, 21.

Psal. 66. 13, 14.

Eccles. 5. 4.

Ephes. 4. 30.

1 Thes. 5. 19.

1 Thes. 2. 12.

1 Thes. 4. 7.

Heb. 10. 29.

sed his mercies going on in sinne, notwithstanding his patience, and long forbearance, he hath threatned us, but our corruptions have not beene curbed; he hath scourged us, but wee have not beene reformed. We have committed iniquitie, notwithstanding the light and checks of our owne consciences, holding the Truth of God in unrighteousnesse, through the vaine-nesse of our imaginations, and blacke darkenesse of our polluted hearts: VVe have made vowes in our afflictions for better obedience, and yet returned with the Dogge to the vomit, and with the Sow to wallow in the filthy mire of our iniquities, as if God required not the payment of those vowes: VVe have cast cold water upon the warme, yea hot motions of the blessed Spirit, quenching it, & grieving it with our wicked and mischievous thoughts: neither have we onely stained our professions, and caused the wicked to speake evil of the good wayes of God, but we have even trampled under foote the blood of the Covenant. Thus have

have we sinned, and wee doe not see it, thus have we transgressed, and we will not beleewe it: Thus have wee rebelled, and we have no desire to know it; did we perceive our deviations, how wee have transgressed every one of his sacred Commands, that all his curses spirituall and temporall are due unto us; and how that many thousands are now in hell who have committed fewer and lesser sinnes than we are guilty of; O what mournings, what cryings and complainings would forthwith be heard! O how willing should we be to heare any thing against our sinnes! we should hearken to any advise against our corruptions, we should be ready to take any course to be freed from this body of death; yea, this would not onely lay down our Peacocks plumes, but with earnest affections, it would make us to say with *Paul*, Lord, what wouldst thou have us to doe? Wee should be then so mightily incensed and enraged against our sinnes, that as *Haman* could not abide *Mordecai*, nor any of the *Jewes* posteritie

Acts 9. 6.

Ester, 3, 8, 9.

*Peccatis vestris
trascunus; nulla
enim nocebit ad-
versitas, si nulla
domineur ini-
quitas. Qui huic
perfecte trascunus;
ceteris non movea-
tur. Bernard.
Pla. 77. 8. 9, 10.*

sterity, but perswaded the King their Lawes were diverse from all people, that they were refractary and rebellious, and that it was not for the Kings profit to suffer them, and that himselfe (if the King would seale a decree against them) would bring tenne thousand talents of silver into the Kings Treasurie for their destruction; so we in hatred to iniquitie, and in detestation of our sinnes, would be content to part with all our riches and treasures whatsoever, that they might be subdued, being the onely rebels against heavenly Edicts, and the greatest adversaries to our poore foules. Then in every thing we should accuse our selves, as our sinnes would be our owne, so our want of comfort would be through our owne default, nothing whatsoever would be admitted by us against the Lord. Then we should worke and labour our hearts for sorrow, making our worldly joyes, as well as our grieve, matters of weeping to our foules, like *Bradford*, every day we should booke every notable accident; if

we

we saw or heard of any good in others, we should take notice of the want of it in our selves, craving mercy & grace to amend our lives. If we heard of any plague or judgement, wee should looke at it as procured by our owne finnes, and cry, Lord have mercy upon us; yea, seeing this not to take effect, wee should take our flinty hearts, as notorious malefactors, and carry them before the Lord: so having once pulled, baled and dragged them into his presence, wee should make pitifull complaints against them, saying, O Lord, these are our wicked, our proud, and our stonie hearts, wee have done what wee can to breake them, but they will not yeeld. O lay them upon thy anvill, strike them and worke them thy selfe, or else they will never be mourning and good hearts. Oh were not our finnes hid from our eyes, but laid naked in their colours before us: how sensible should wee be of the guilt of every failing: like greene wounds the least touch of a finger would hurt our soules, the least wa-
N vering

vering and staggering in faith, would seeme as a burden insupportable for us to beare; *Mat. 9. 24.* yea then wee should feare destruction, and eternall damnation upon the attempt, assault, or fault of every sinne, *Rom. 1. 24. Rom. 6. 23. Prov. 14. 16.*

Postquam diligenter cubiculum examinamus, perpergatum id nobis videtur, ac sole per sinistram illuminato radios atomorum sordibus infinitis permixtos videmus. Spide insit. Christ.

Were our hearts prickt with the the sense of mercy in the threatening of judgement, how inquisitive should wee be after our smallest slips, our atomes, our moates would appeare as beames before us. Wee should pray with *David*, *Lord shew mee the errors of my life, and let mee see or be acquainted with my secret sins:* yea wee should not cease, but goe on to have them discovered, though it were to the augmentation of our owne griefe, contrary to the youngmans practice spoken off by *Saint Mathew*, *Chap. 9. v. 22.* Oh what mournfull feeling, and bleeding affections should wee then have! then our teares would be as water to wash Christs fette, and the haire of our heads, as a towell to wipe them withall: *Luke 7. 38.* Then

we should be wholly as *Benbadabs* servants, looke at the pity of the Kings of Israel, 1 *King.* 20. 32. and wholly put our selves upon Gods mercy: then wee should judge our selves to the pit of hell, and no way, in regard of Gods justice, gainsay the damnation of our owne soules: *Dan.* 9. 7. *Luk.* 15. 21. Were Gods menaces efficacious to dissolve our spirits, Oh how patient should we be to God, impatient to our selves, and how full of wrath against all our sinnes! Were his threatnings so prevailing, as to lead us by the hand from one sinne to another, untill they had shewed us every transgression of our soules, as we should thinke basely of our selves, so wee should be perswaded that no man can thinke worse of us than wee are. Then with *Judah* wee should not condemne *Thamar*, *Gen.* 38. 24. passe rash and damnatory sentences upon other men: no all, our censures and verdicts would be against our selves. Oh then how freely should wee confesse our sinnes, say with *Augustine*, Wee have done it.

*Multi arguente
nullo peccatores
esse contenti,
cum vero de culpa
sua fuerint for-
tasse correpti, de-
fensionis patroci-
nium querunt, ne
peccatores vide-
antur. Greg. mor.
lib. 22. cap. 14.*

*August. contra
lib. 1. 1. cap. 1.*

and wee will doe it, and it is the love of thee, and thy love to us O Lord that moves us to it. Oh how full would our acknowledgements be, even reaching and extending to all degrees of sinne! *Daniel* would be our president, who said, *Wee have sinned, i. by errors, and deviation: wee have done iniquity, viz. by perverse walking, done wickedly, by being industrious to bring it forth: wee have rebelled: viz. by obstinacie and warre against God our Sovereigne; by departing from thy precepts, i. e. wilfully sinning notwithstanding the apprehension of light and danger.* Thus neither particular sinnes, nor any degree of sinne would bee concealed by us. O (beloved) were our soules thus wounded, and did wee apprehend the stroakes to be laid upon us by our incensed, yet gracious Father, O how should wee begge for mercy, sue for pardon, and cry for forgivenesse, nothing would cheare us, but the beames of his love: nothing would quiet us, but the light of his countenance: nothing would

com-

comfort us, did wee not prevaile for his gracious acceptance: Oh that the judgements that are gone forth against us, would thus discover sin, melt our hearts, and bring us in seasons, and sincere confession upon our knees: Thus wee might say with the King of Israck, *O God, it is good for us that thou hast thus afflicted us*: surely, if they doe not thus worke, the fault is not Gods, but our owne, either in not harkning, not applying, or soone forgetting the evill that hee pronounceth against us. For hee intends repentance, mercy, and forgivenesse in all the troubles hee threatens to bring upon us.

Sinne is a way.

The Lord under the metaphor of an erring traveller, sets out the sin of Israck; for so farre as a man goes on in the way of transgression, so farre hee departeth from the God of heaven: man in Adam was set in the right path to happinesse, but listning to Sathan, and yeelding to carnall reason, by the pursuit of his vicious and corrupt desires, hee

Qui perverse vivit, aliquam profecto a natura humana viam incedit, Bed. in pro. cap. 21.

Viam, impiorum nominat, primus consilia molitiones, studia, contritus & actiones eorum; deinde externum illum splendorem, dignitatem, auctoritatem, potentiam, qua solidi sese efferunt, & que aliis formida esse volunt. Mol. ber. in Psal. 1.

plots on to his owne misery. Hence it is that *David* tels us, *the way of the wicked shall perish*, *Psal. 1. 6.* what is his way, but his conversation, or his path, but his course of living? for the high way of the upright is to depart from evill: and he that keepeth his way, preserveth his soule, *Prov. 16. 17.* Mens wayes are their thoughts, words, and actions; therefore said *Moses*, when *God* looked upon the earth, he beheld it were corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted his way before him, *Gen. 6. 12.* The men of the world were corrupt in their imaginations, wicked in their communications, and prophane in their actions; and all these were as a testimony of their aberrations; for where in so ever man is a transgressor, going beyond his bounds, therein you find him in the way of sinne, *1 Ioh. 3. 4.* It is said of *Asa*, that hee did evill in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the wayes of *Ieroboam*. What was *Ieroboams* way? surely it was that sinne, wherewith he made *Israel* to sinne, *1 King. 15. 34.* And thus *Ahaziah* is reported to goe in the

*Via cuius corrup-
ta, sunt mores, con-
silia, & actiones
hominum prava.
Parens in Gen. 6.*

the way of the house of *Abab*, and thereby to provoke the Lord, 2 *King. 8. 27.* And when did Israel pervert her way, but when shee forgot to obey the Lord her God? *Jer. 3. 22.* God and man have both their wayes; God comes to man, when by sweet and pressing motions he stirs him up to the duties of holinesse: man comes to God, when hee yeelds submissive and sincere obedience. God departs from man, when hee withdrawes his spirit: and man goes from God, when duties commanded are neglected; or evils forbidden are committed by him. That sinne is a way, it will more easily appeare, if you consider the adjuncts, or properties of a way.

First, high wayes are usually ancient, and of long continuance: the way of sinne, with all the waies upon earth, may plead antiquity: Have not the Angels that fell from Heaven; *Adam* that was cast out of Paradise; the inhabitants of the five Cities which by fire were made examples of vengeance:

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and

Via Dei est per quam ad nos venit, interna aspiratio; via Dei per quam ad illum imus, bona operatio: vna ergo Dei considerat qui studio boni operis emendandi inspicit, Hug. de Sanct. viii. in Pl. 1. 2. Dicunt, vocat a nobis, quia ad se aditum praeberet recusant, cumque praevis afflictibus impugnant, etiam per verbi laudare videtur, Greg. mor. lib. 15. cap. 19. Custodit, & non declinat, qui hoc ubi intendit, operatur. Custodit quippe per intentionem, est non declinata per operationem. Haec namque est sollicitudo iustorum, ut actus suos quotidie iuxta vias veritatis examinent, & eas sibi in regulam proponentes, a rectitudinis eorum tramite non declinent, Greg. mor. lib. 16. c. 17. Non inter illos locorum Deus relinquitur sed pravitae motum, Ambros. in Psal. 119.

*Qui iussi fumus
per angustam por-
tam incedere, pro-
latam semper in-
cedimus, Chrys.
Nulla nos prospera
blandiens se-
ducas, quia est
falsus amator qui
in itinere amena
prata conspiciens,
obliviscitur ut quo
vendebatur, Greg.
in Evang. Hom.
14.*

and all carnall creatures from the first creation unto this day tread in this path; Surely this is the old way, which all the wicked men of the world have trodden, *Iob. 22. 14.*

Secondly, high wayes lye patent and open to all passengers; Princes, and Subjects; Peeres, and Pefants; Nobles, and despicable persons, men of all sorts, rankes, and qualities, may passe through them. And doth not sinne as a great roade admit of all commers whatsoever? Surely in respect of holinesse, I may take up *Dauids* complaint, and say, *All are gone out of the way, Psal. 14. 3.* yea wee have all wandred from the way of truth, and the Sunne of righteousness hath not shone splendidly in our soules: like foolish travellers, we look at the world as a pleasant meadow, and at the lust thereof as odoriferous flowers; and so being deceived through the deceitfulness of sinne, wee forget our selves, lose our way, and neglect the end of our faith, the salvation of our soules: Can any of Gods dearest, and endeared Saints, plead immunity

immunity from sinne? Was not the Spouse in the Canticles, blacke in respect of her infirmities? *Cont.* 15. And have wee not all, like sheepe, gone astray, *Isay* 53. 6. and therefore have need to returne to the chiefe shepheard of our soules?

Thirdly, common roads are usually broad and spacious, yea so broad, that many may walke together: such is the way of sinne, not onely because it is a way of liberty to the flesh, giving men leave to run into any courses, which concur and agree with their corrupt humors, imposing no conditions of restraint, but saying to them as *Ahab's* Chaplains did, when they are led according to the lust of their owne hearts, *Goe and prosper*, *1 King.* 22. but also in regard of the multitudes, that goe hand in hand with joynt affections in it contrary to the will of God. In the dayes of *Noah* all flesh had corrupted its way, *Gen.* 6. 12. Foure hundred Prophets at one time consented together to flatter the King of Israel, *1 King.* 22. Did not the men of Sodom

Wherefore sinne
is called a wide
and broad way.

Sodome, when they purposed villany against *Lot*, and the Angels compassed the house round about, from the young men even to the old, yea all the people from all quarters, *Sam. 19. 4.* When *Pilate* askt the people what should be done with *Christ*, did they not all say, *Let him be crucified?* *Matth. 27. 22.* Who gave heed to *Simon* the sorcerer of *Samaria*? did not all from the least unto the greatest? *Act. 8. 9, 10.* *Pauls* complaint is, that all seek their owne, not that which is *Iesus Christ*, *Phil. 2. 21.* And *S. Iohn* prophesying of the comming of *Antichrist*, saith, that all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the booke of life, *Apoc. 13. 8, 16.* Thus you see that verified which sometimes our Saviour spake, that wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that goe in therereat. *Matth. 7. 13.*

Fourthly, every way tends to some speciall, and particular place: Would you know whither sinne would bring you? *Christ* tels us

it leadsto ruine, and Salomon assures us that it will carry us to the chambers of death.

Prophane creatures may sooth up themselves as long as they will with a hope of heaven, but their corruptions like a bowle runne downe the hill, and will not stay untill they come to hell: For the transgressors shall be destroyed together, and the end of the wicked shall be cut off, *Psal. 37. 38.* Though the chamber of the adulteresse be richly deckt, her bed perfumed, and her words alluring, yet her house is the way to the grave, *Prov. 7. 27. & her guests are in the chambers of hell, Prov. 9. 18.* The cousinging and deceitfull person tasteth sweetnesse in the bread of fraud, but in the end his mouth shall be filled with gravell, *Prov. 20. 17.* Wine goes pleasantly downe the throat of a drunkard, but afterward it will bite like a serpent, and hurt like an adder, *Prov. 23. 32.* The rich man fared deliciously, and went bravely every day, hee had the world in a band, and outward contentment to the full; he had a pleasant journey, but where was

was his arrivall & did not hee die, and dying was hee not in the torments of hell, *Luk. 16. 22, 23.* As *Ioab* dealt with *Amasa*; sinne salutes us, but saluting us it kills us. His kindnesse is fatall; for pleasing our minds it destroyes our soules. Therefore observe *Pauls* exhortation, and take heed lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin, for the high way of sin is the high road to destruction, *1.*

Sin is an evill way.

Evill is not onely a privation of good, but a positive inherent quality defiling the soule. Good things may be made evill; but this may seeme to be *per accidens*: Thus the table of the wicked becomes a snare unto them, and that which should make for their welfare becomes a trap. *Psal. 69. 22.* God threatning the rebellious Jewes, because they would not give glory to his great name, telleth them that he will send a curse upon them, and that he will curse their very blessings, that they had received from him, *Mal. 2. 2.* somethings are evill in opinion only:

ly: thus whereas God commands us to be fervent in spirit, zeale is reputed giddinesse, whereas wee are charged to come out of Babylon, our not yeelding to superstition is reputed faction, and whereas wee are advised to walke circumspectly, or exactly, strictnesse in Gods service is now esteemed Puritanisme, and precisenesse. Thus formes of holinesse are preferred before the power of godlinesse; *But woe,* saith the Prophet, *to them that call goodes will, and evill good, I say 5. 20.* Lastly, that is properly, truly, and really evill, which is so by nature, and thus is every thing that is against or besides the Law of God, and this is sinne which is a breach thereof, and of all other it is the greatest evill in the world; is it not by this that the soule of man, the noblest creature under heaven made to be Gods companion, is debased, and made a slave to every base lust.

All the dirt in the world cannot defile the Sunne; yet mans soule bearing the image of the God of holinesse, and therein surpassing the

the Sunne in purenesse, is contaminated, and polluted by sinne, *Mat. 15. 20.* This evill robbeth us of God our chiefest good, making us live without God in this present world; and in depriving us of God, it bereaves us of all things: for all things are ours no further than God is ours. Surely now I may say, as *David* said, *Blissed is the man that is undefiled in his way, Psal. 119. 1.* Mens wayes, and mens actions, and mens evill workes are their evill wayes. Hence it is that sinne is termed a way that is not good, *Psal. 36. 4.* The way of sinners, *Psal. 1. 1.* A way of falshood. *Psal. 119. 104.* and an evill way. *Prov. 2. 12.* Wherefore is it that the wise man tels us, that the feare of the Lord is to hate evill, pride, arrogancie, and the evill way, *Prov. 8. 13.* And that who so causeth the righteous to goe astray in an evill way, hee shall fall himselfe into his owne pit; but only that he apprehends it to be extremely evill;

r God takes all other evils upon himselfe, Is there any evill in the City,

City, and I have not done it onely hee disclaimeth sinne as a bastard of some others getting, for hee is the Father of Lights, *Iam. 1. 13.* Hereupon he doth assure us that the way of the wicked seduceth the soule, *Prov. 12. 26.* and that this way is as darknesse, evill men not knowing at what they stumble, *Pro. 4. 19.* Was it good the Lord would approve of it? it is the exceeding sinfulness of it that makes the Lord inveigh against it.

Gods love is set upon variety of objects, but all his infinite hatred, with all its force of detestation, light, and concurre upon sinne. Didst thou see all the evils in the world laid upon one mans backe, thou canst not say that God simply hates him for them: It is not because men are poore, afflicted, despicable, and contemned, but because they are sinfull that God abhorres them; it is not because of Israels thralldome or captivity, that hee doth despise her, but in regard she is a people of no understanding; therefore though hee made her, hee will

will have no mercy on her, *Isay 27.*

11. God loveth him that followeth after righteousness, but it is the way of the wicked onely, that is an abomination unto him, *Prov.*

15. 9.

3 Was this a safe and a loving way, the Saints of God would embrace it, and with earnestnesse desire to tread it: but because it is evil, therefore they wholly and altogether detest it. Hence it was

that *David* refrained his feet, viz: his affections from every evill way, *Psal.*

119. 101. and protested to the whole world that hee hated every false way, *Psalme. 119. 104.* Yea, when they come to remember, and call to minde their own evill wayes, and their doings that were not good, they loath themselves in their owne sight, *Ezek. 36. 31.*

Lastly, what threw those glorious Angells out of heaven, but sinne? whilst they were in that good way, they were radiant and splendent in their glory, but comming acquainted with sinne, and once closing with it, heaven would no longer beare

bear them, they became ugly creatures, infernall devills, and are kept in chaines of darkenesse unto the great day; and as sinne was destructive to those eminent lights, so it is yet damning to every one that yeelds himselfe a servant to obey it, It is onely evill that is damnable; for did not man walke in the way of sinne, he should never come to hell; but because he is evill, wicked and perverse in his wayes, therefore it is that he falleth all at once, whereas he that walketh uprightly is sure to be saved. *Pro. 28. 18.*

Application.

First, take *Salomons* advise; Enter not into the paths of the wicked, and goe not in the way of evill men: Avoide it, passe not by it, turne from it, and passe away, *Prov. 4. 14, 15.* It may seeme delightfull and pleasant to corrupt nature, but the reward thereof is misery, and the end destruction; for as it is a way, and an evill way, the reward of the walkers is eternall death, *Rom. 6. 23.* Consider, first, it will prove so hard, that it will surbait the feete of thy affections, that thou shalt not be able to tread in the
O path

path of holinesse, for the way of transgressors is hard, *Prov. 13. 15.* Yea besides the hardnesse there is such thornes and snares in the way of the froward, that as they will be insnared, so they will be so pricked, that the very blood will spring out of their soules, *Prov. 22. 5.*

Secondly, this is such a strange way as God will not be acquainted with, for he is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity with approbation, whilest the soule followes sin, it forsakes the Lord, it can not get out of his reach, but it may flee from his favour by its rebellious will. And thus were the *Ephesians* alienated from God, *'Ephe. 4. 18.* God and thy soule can have no communion in the way of sinne; for Hee and Be-
liall cannot agree together, and hee that is farre from *Iehovah* shall per-
ish, *Psal. 73. 27.* Let godlinesse, not sinne be thy way, for sinne is a froward and a strange way, *Pro. 21. 8.*

Thirdly, this path is very crooked, it is full of windings; every sinne is a turne, and if thou turne oft, thou wilt

wilt come into such a Labyrinth, that thou wilt never know how to turne backe againe : And assure thy selfe of this, that as for such as turne aside unto their crooked wayes, are vexations to mens spirits : they that goe in this crooked path, shall never know peace, *Esay 59.8.*

Lastly, the roade of sinne will deceive you in the end : it will carry you whither you have no desire to go, it will leade you not to the gates of heaven, but to the gates of hell : It will so infatuate you, that you shall not know it to be the way of sinne, *Pro. 5.6.* And you shall goe like a foole to the stockes, and like an ox to the slaughter, to your owne destructions, and however it may seeme light unto you, yet the end thereof is death, *Pro. 14.12.1.* therefore take heed.

But how comes it to passe, that we see so many good men in this way of sinne? Are they not sometimes diffident and distrustfull, *Psal. 31.22.* sometimes by spirituall pride lifted up above measure, *1 Cor. 12.7.* and sometimes secret

reservation to themselves, and by-ends in the performances of duties? *Psal.* 51. 10? Are they not selfe-confident, *Psal.* 30. 6. Very unprofitable under meanes of mercies received, *Nehe.* 9. 35. Unruly, passionate, *Psal.* 73. 3. 22. Impatient under Gods hand, *Esay* 45. 9. Unthankfull for spirituall favours, *Hos.* 8. 12. Cowardly in good causes, *Ier.* 9. 2. and perfunctory in the performance of holy duties, *Esay* 64. 7. And doe you looke that I should avoid this evill way?

Answ.

It is true, as *Salomon* saith, There is not a just man upon Earth that doth good and sinneth not: the brightest day hath its night; the finest piece of cloath its list; the purest gold its drosse; the clearest candle its snuffe; and the exactest, yea, the perfectest man on earth a multitude of imperfections: Yet for thy satisfaction, looke seriously a little wile upon these insuing Particulars.

First, though a good man slip aside, for there is none that sinneth not, *1 Kin.* 8. 46. and what is man that hee

he should be cleane, and he that is borne of a woman, that he should be righteous, *Iob 15.14*. Yet he sets not footing with a resolution to goe forward in that way.

Secondly, though hee fall into sinne, yet as *S. Iohn* saith, hee doth not commit sinne *Αμαρτιαν ομολοει*, hee doth not make sin, that is, he doth not much of sinne, or make it his worke to sinne, he steps into it at unawares, but he doth not walke in it; he strayes, but he doth not stand, he stumbles unwillingly, but he doth not sit downe willfully; hee loves the Truth, and it is his desire to worke by the rule of Truth.

Thirdly, when sinne presents it selfe, and beginnes to complement, and scrape acquaintance with his soule, hee regards it not, it is as well-come as water into his shooes: though corruption kindle the fire, yet grace powres on the water; though his base heart beginne to yeeld, and seeme to grant that stollen waters are sweete, yet grace telling him the dead are there, he will not suffer them so much as to

*Differunt peccata
& peccatum fa-
cero: Peccata
generaliter
dicuntur qui-
cunque in suis
actionibus a recta
legis divina re-
gula deficiunt,
sive id fiat ex in-
firmisade, ex ig-
norantia, sive ex
malitia: peccatum
facere dicuntur
proprie qui studio
peccandi tenen-
tur, & ex animo
peccant, & pec-
cati veluti Ar-
tificium quoddam
falsitatem, et
amissio opus exter-
num, alia nondum
perficiant, quod
proprium est re-
proborum.*

come within his lippes, and if sinne at unawares slip in upon him, it is entertained as a beastly drunkard, or a debaucht swearer in the house of a pious Christian, if it will not out, he is ready for to pull it forth by the very eares, and if at any time he find it sturdy and too strong for him to deale with, then he calls for helpe, and cries out murther against, saying, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?*

Fourthly, if his corruptions be so prevailling, that he can no way stand out against them, his yeelding is with reluctancy, not with affection; it is the evill that he would not doe which he doth, and the good that he would doe, he doth not. Apprehending sinne to be predominant, and himselfe not able to last out the fire thereof, his eyes powre out teares unto God, *Iob 16. 20.* and he drawes up whole buckets of water from the bottome of his soule, crying, as he throwes them forth, *I have sinned against the Lord.*

Fifthly,

Fifthly, though thou maist see him goe on, and continue in sinne, yet hee will not alwayes goe forward, he will once turne backe againe, though hee fall foulely, yet he can never fall finally; for as Christs sheepe shall never perish, so the seede of God remaineth in him; A night may be long and dark, but the longest and the darkest night hath its day: the seede of grace may be covered with corruption, like fire with ashes, the Sunne with a cloud, or corne with elods; yet in as much as it remaines and is in his soule, when once the Spirit blowes it with his sweet motions, it will sparkle cheerefully; when the cloud is dispersed, the excellency of Christ, and the beauty of holinesse displayed; it will send out its radiant beames and shine splendidly in that Horizon: when the Winter is past, the Spring appeares, and the dew of heaven distills upon it, it will spring up sweetly; therefore let not his falls be thy encouragement to goe on in sinne, for he is but in a swoound; hee will revive, his foote

is but flipt, he will get up againe.

Lastly, dost thou see holy men commit sin, and often over-powered or over-mastered with corruption, thou hast then good cause to feare, they have more Antidotes to prevent it, and more helpes to resolve and withstand it, than thou hast, therefore it should make thee watchfull, and carefull to looke about thee, yea to lament thy wofull condition; the Firre trees may howle, when the Cedars are fallen.

Secondly, learne hence to pity those poore soules, that wander and goe astray in this evill way; first, they are to be pitied, they have gone farre out of the way, it will toyle them sore to come backe againe, they were estranged from the wombe, and they went astray so soone as ever they were borne, *Psal. 58.3.* It is hard to breake off old customes, it will make them have many a painefull and weary steppe; yea it will cost them many a teare, many a sigh, and many a sob, before they get into the right path.

Secondly,

Secondly, Is not their folly an object of pity, who change mortality for an Apple, a Birth-right for Belly-cheere, a Portion in Christ for base pleasures; a Royalty in heaven, for a poore Farme on earth, and forsake the Fountaine of living water, to digge Cisternes unto themselves that will hold no water? Thirdly, doe we not pity them, who can doe nothing aright? when these men pray, it is but with their lippes, not their hearts.

When they heare, the thoughts of the world take up their soules, their memories are as sieles to retaine Chasse, but for to let out good Corne; when they forgive, they doe not forget, they retaine severall grudges, heart-risings, and desires of revenge in their base spirits: thus there is a perverse spirit in the midst of their best actions, and therefore they erre in every one of their wayes, *Esay 19. 14.* And thus their whole way is an abomination unto the Lord God, *Pro. 15. 9.* Fourthly, like straggling sheepe, they have no certaine pasture, they are continual-

nually subject to be hurried from place to place, they are here to day, but before to-morrow their very bones may be gnawed by the hellish Wolves. Fifthly, they are out of Christs pale, he lookes not to them, he provides not for them, neither does he goe in nor out before them, *Esay* 13, 14. Thus like sheepe without a Shepheard, scattered upon the mountaines; they are a prey for the teeth of every ravenous curre. Lastly, like stray sheepe, they are ever in feare, every sound affrightes them, and every barke of a little dogge, makes them either couch or runne away, witnesse *Belsazar*, witnesse *Felix*; O then pitry, I beseech you, these poore creatures, rejoyce not in your deviations, but bemoane their miseries, and let Rivers of water runne downe your eyes, because they keepe not the Lawes of God. 1.

Sinne is Israels owne way.

Though God be the efficient of their sorrowes, he will have no hand in their sinnes, they are their owne: There is nothing that man can so properly

properly lay claime to as the evill of his wayes, for all things (fin excepted) under the cope of heaven are the Lords; therefore God having beene no agent in any vicious wayes, sets the Saddle upon the right horse, layes the fault where it is, and returnes them to *Israel* who had the most reason (being the Author) to challenge them for her owne; what was said of her Watchmen, might be applied unto them; therefore saith *Iehovah*, *If they turne from their evill*: Wherefore was it, that Gods fury was powred out upon this the house of *Israel*, that they were scattered amongst the Heathen, and dispersed through the countries? was it not because they defiled their Land by their owne way and by their doings; and because their way was before him, as the uncleannesse of a removed woman? *Ephes. 36. 17, 18, 19.* Gods wayes are righteousness, and his paths holinesse, *Psal. 145. 17. His eyes are upon the wayes of man, Iob 34. 21.* hee considers all the goings of his people, and he beholds nothing but

but naughtinesse, and base prophanenesse, and that which addes to her impietie, is that all her evils are her owne, so there is no spot in them in her apprehension, they are all cleane in her owne sight, *Prov. 16.2.*

I Mans heart, saith *Salomon*, deviseth his way, *Pro. 16.9.* Indeed the minde is a great stickler in that which is naught, doth it not detaine it selfe from the thought that might detaine it from acting of evill? thereby expressing its voluntary inconsideratenesse of the sinfulness of sinne, to attract the heart, as the loadstone doth the iron: doth it not suggest the sweetnesse, advantage necessity, smallnesse and secrecy of the sinne, or else the possibility, facility, and efficacie of repentance, for removall of the guilt thereof? nay, doth it not cogitate, and thinke with it selfe how it may actuate and commit those evils that Satan presents before it, and how it may come off fairely and smoothly, notwithstanding the commission of them? Thus though God created man upright,

right, hee hath sought out many inventions, *Eccles. 7. 29.* Did not *Israel* devise iniquitie, worke evill upon her bed, and when the morning was light, put in practise? *Mich. 2. 2.* Was she not defiled with her owne workes, and did shee not goe a whoring after her owne inventions? *Psal. 100. 39.* And is not that a mans owne which he doth devise?

2 The life of the plant is the roote, and the roote claimes a property in the fruit; the life of sin is a love thereof; for as union and action are the effects of affection, so it is mans love to iniquity that gives him a right unto it, and makes him with fervency, desire to be an actor in it. Did the house of *Judah* resolve against sinne? no, her resolutions were wholly for sinne; did not God charge her to make her wayes and her doings good, *Ier. 18. 11.* And did she not returne a devillish and a desperate answer? saying, Thou maist as well hold thy peace, thou dost but go about to wash the *Blackmore* white, while thou seekst by perswasion to draw us to repentance,

*Malorum ultio
maius est mala
sua amare,
ubi turpia non
solum delectant
sed etiam placent.
Senec. Epist. 39.*

penitance: for there is no hope; *Wee will walk after our own devices, & every one doe according to the imagination of his evill heart, Ier. 18. 12.* Indeede she loved to wander, and therefore would not refraine her feete, *Ier. 14. 10.* If *Ephraim* be joyned to Idolls, shee must be let alone, you may as well take away her life, as take away her god. If her drinke be sower, or gone, that there be nothing but dregges behind, she must not be tendred better, drinke her lees or dregges, give her the best content, for her Rulers or her shields, with shame doe love, Give ye, *Hos. 4. 17.* But let me a little apply the words of the Prophet, *Psa. 4. 2.* O ye sonnes of men how, long will you turne Gods glory into shame? how long will you love vanity, and follow after lies? Your indeared affections to your base corruptions gave you a property to the eternall confusion of your poore soules.

Doth not God himselfe say concerning this people, that they have chosen their owne wayes, and that their soule delighteth in their abominations,

minations? *Esay 66.3.* God tenders the old and the good way to the inhabitants of *Judah*, she refused it: Satan sets the pleasing and delectable wayes of sinne before her, these she accepts, thus they are of those that rebell against the light: they know not their wayes, nor abide in the pathes thereof, *Iob 24.13.* Now do we not terme that a mans owne, which above all things he makes choyce off? Shall *Israel*, against Reason, Religion, vowes, promises, comminations, heaven & hell, maintaine a resolution of evill in her base heart, and her evill not be said to be her owne?

Had *Israel* studied, *excutere, non excusare*, to shake off, not to excuse her sinnes, she had declaimed them, but defending them, and shrouding them under the King of her protection, shee layes claime unto them: when God charged her with incorrigiblenesse, *Ier. 2. 30.* with unthankfulnesse for his blessings, *Ier. 3. 31.* and with the blood of the soules of the poore innocents, *Ier. 2. 34.* did she not plead innocency, and

and tell him to his face that she had not sinned against him, *Ier. 2. 35.* Like *Salomons* whore, having beene in the abominable act of uncleannesse, wipeth her mouth, and saith, she is cleansed from her sinne. If this will not serve to pleade *Israels* property, yet let the universality of her practise challenge them for her owne: Have they not all deeply revolted? *Esay, 31. 6.* Yea hath not the Priest and the Prophet erred through strong drinke? and are they not so swallowed up of winde, that they erre in vision, and stumble in judgement? *Ef. 28. 7.* If you aske me how it comes to passe that so many erre, that so many tread in this evill path; surely, it is first in regard of Satan, the indefatigable enimie of mens soules, who as he is a lier from the beginning, seekes by lying vanities to delude mens soules, *Ioh. 8. 44.* He would have whole Kingdomes as deepe in sinne, and as deepe in torment as himselfe: hee envies the prosperitie of Nations, it is the care of his heart, the marke that he shouteth at, it is the cause that

that hee watcheth, walketh, and
roareth, to pervert, corrupt, and sub-
vert whole dominions, and you
know that his power is effectuell in
the soules of disobedient ones,
Eph. 2. 2.

Secondly, they are ignorant of
the excellencie of religion, and the
beauty of holinesse: they doe not
know what is the riches of the glory
of the Ministry among the Gen-
tiles, which is Christ in the belee-
ving soule: thus was the case with
Israel, *The ox knoweth his owner, and
the asse his masters crib*, but shee
knew not God, shee did not consi-
der the workes of God, *Isay 1. 3.*
she was wise to doe evill, but to do
well she had no knowledge, *Ier. 4.*
22.

Thirdly, in all mens spirits natu-
rally there is a spirit of contumacie,
or rebellion, *2 King. 17. 14, 15.* this
spirit was in the midst of this
people, and therefore they would
not frame their doings to turne un-
to the Lord, *Hos. 5. 4.*

Fourthly, you know that careless
shepheards are the cause of scab-
bed

bed sheepe ; Did not her teachers with lies make the heart of the righteous sad,whom God made chearfull?and did they not strengthen the hands of the wicked, that they should not returne by promising life unto their sinfull soules? *Ezek.*

13. 22.

Lastly, *Iudah* never learned *Dauids* Arithmeticke, to number her daies; for had she, she would have applyed her heart to wisdom, not to sin, *Psal. 90. 12.* But because shee remembered not her latter end, therefore she came downe wonderfully, *Lament. 1. 9.* as well in sinne, as by the punishment of sinne. 1. So that now, if her invention of sinne, affection to sinne, election and protection of sinne, an universality of obedience to the lawes of sinne, will appropriate this evill way to the house of *Israel*, then it is her owne; and so it is, for God himselfe layes it upon her saying, *If they turne from their evill. 1.*

If *Israel* repent her of her sinne, and turne from her evill way, God will repent of the evill pronounced against her. 1.

Repent-

Repentance is not properly in God; it is attributed unto him, *secundum modum*, according to the manner, but not *secundum rem*, according to the thing: for when God seemes to doe that, which men do indeed, then that which is the cause of such doing in men is attributed to God, it is not really in him, but only by way of similitude: hee speaketh according to our capacity, hee worketh according to his owne counsell, for as Gods anger is no disturbance of mind in him, but his judgement assigning sinne the deserved punishment, so his revolving of thoughts is an unchanged ordering of changeable things: For God repenteth not of any thing hee doth, as man doth, but his knowledge of a thing ere it be done, and his thought of it when it is done, are both like firme, and fixed.

August. de civit.
Dei, lib. 15. c. 25

Though God be said to change his resolution (as the Scriptures Tropically say, that hee repented) yet this is in respect of mans hope, or natures order, not according to

August. de civit.
Dei, l. 14. c. 11.

his owne prescience. 1.

God in repenting, though he will a change, yet hee doth not change his will: to instance; it was his will from everlasting to have the Law with ceremonies at one time, and Gospell without ceremonies at another time: these both successively came to passe; and though there was a change in the matter or subject, yet there was no change in him that disposed of it.

Gods purposes are not alwaies wholly, they are sometimes but in part revealed. God bids *Abraham* goe to *Moria*, and sacrifice his son; *Abraham* heares Gods command, but he is ignorant of Gods intent; Gods purpose was, as to try his faith, so to save the child: *Abraham* goes, and comming up the place of execution, hath his knife ready, and his arme stretched forth to give the mortall wound, and God bids him stay his hands: here as God accepted the will for the deed, so hee changed but his sentence pronounced, not his counsell intended: More plainly; God is then said to repent,

Aliud mutare voluntatem, aliud velle mutationem.
I. Aquin.

Mutat sententiam, non mutat consilium, Greg.
mor. l. 20. c. 23.

repent, when that which hee once willed to be hereafter, by the counsell of the same will causeh not to be; therein not changing his owne counsell, but onely willing the change of the things, that the same things for their period of time shall be, and then shall cease. If this that I have spoken concerning Gods repenting, will not serve, accept of that which *Aquinas* hath said upon this particular, his words are these: As the Lord is said to be angry, not because the passion of anger is in God, but because hee behaves himselfe as one that is angry, so farre as concernes the effect of punishing; so is hee said to repent, not because a change of repentance is in God, but because hee is like one that repents, whilst hee changeth what hee had done.

Israel having cast off God, he was ready to cut her off, shee having committed grievous sinnes, he was ready to overtake her with severe punishments; but now if shee will returne hee will not inflie, if shee

Vbi legitur quod peniteas cum, mutatio eorum significatur, immutabilis manente praesentia divina, Aug. de civit. Dei lib. 17. cap. 7.

Sicut Dominus ipse dicitur, non quia in Deo est passio ira, sed quia ad modum irati se habet, quantum ad punitionis effectum; ita penitentia dicitur, non quia est in Deo commutatio penitentia, sed quia admodum penitentis se habet, dum mutat quod fecerat. Aquin. in Rom. Penitentia est omnimoda mutatio, sed non post errorem in Deo, ut in hominibus, dispensatio vero verum et mutatio eventuum, sive operum, non Dei consiliorum; quia quia tempore facit, ab eterno facere destitit. Theod. quæst. 50. super Genes.

will repent hee will not execute, if shee will turne, to him; hee will turne in mercy to her selfe, repenting of the evill that hee had pronounced against her. The devil hath so insinuated his deceits into the heart of *Judah*, that shee hath willingly been carried after evil lusts, & customes in sin, hath so inebriated and besotted her, that forgetting her selfe, shee is almost growne obdurate in her evill wayes, shee hath kindled the fire by consenting unto Satans motions, shee hath added fewell to encrease the burnings, by heaping sinne upon sinne, and she is almost ready to enter into the flame, having well-nigh filled up the irremediable summe of her sinnes, by the iniquity of her encreasing faults; but yet though her impieties be growing to a great height, and like importunate suitors call for justice, God is content to reverse his sentence upon her reversion by serious and sincere repentance.

First, to what end is it that mercy, yea righteousness looks downe from heaven? Is it not that it may be
be

be favourable to them, who in penitentiall revenge are impartiall to themselves? it cannot give them up as *Admah*, and make them as *Zeboim*, if it once see them smite upon their thigh with *Ephraim*: but if it find thy soule like Israels hankering after the flesh-pots of Egypt, having not onely secret, but strong desires after evill courses, resolving to adhere to vicious projects, and giving it selfe wholly to walke in opposite wayes, it will not spare, but smite; not forgive, but condemne; not pardon, but punish such a soule. For it is he that confesseth, and forsaketh his sinne that shall have mercy: and he that loveth & concealeth his iniquity, that shall never prosper: though wee have beene grievous sinners, our repentance will please the Lord, if it proceed from a contrite spirit; it is our non-repenting after sinnes commission, that chiefly stirres up his indignation: the childs teares with acknowledgement make his father remit the fault; obstinacie hastens his whipping, and obduracie mul-

Non dolere quis peccaveris, magis indignari atque irasci facit deum, quam illud peccatum quod ante perpetraveras.

tiplies his throakes: mercy pities the afflicted, it commiserates the broken heart; it doth not adde sorrow to sorrow, it never arraignes the soule where it finds the soule arraigned it selfe. Relenting Nations shall be acquitted, they are onely stubborn Kingdomes that righteousnesse will condemne. Did not God promise this people, that though they were back-sliding children, if they would returne hee would heale their rebellions, *Ier. 3. 22.* And though shee was fallen by her iniquity, if shee would repent and supplicate for mercy at the throne of grace, that hee would take away all impiety, receive her graciously, cure her back-slidings, love her freely? *Hos. 14. 1, 2, 4.* Is it not his desire that the wicked should turne from his evill way and live? Hath hee not sworne that hee takes no pleasure in the death of their soules, and did hee not say to this people, *Turne yee, turne yee, why will yee die O house of Israel? Ezech. 33. 11.* Words and oathes are of a tying & a binding nature: Hath God promised

led favour to repenting Nations, and will he deny it? hath he sworne to be gracious to mourning Kingdomes, and will he reject them, and rejecting them destroy them? will hee not be so good as his word? yea, hee is a God of truth, and cannot lie: hee is just in all his wayes, hee will not like perfidious man sweare one thing, and do another; whatsoever hee hath promised hee will performe, and whatsoever hee hath sworne to doe hee will accomplish. Againe, wherefore should God call upon us for an aversion from sin, & a reversion to himselfe, but onely that he would have a reconciliation betwixt himselfe and our soules? 2 Cor. 5. 19. Surely, it was to this end that hee spake by the Prophet Zachary to the inhabitants of Hierusalem, saying, *Turne yer, I will turne unto you, Zech. 1. 3.*

Reconciliation then is the end of repentance, and it shall not be frustrated: no Nation, no Kingdom, no People, ever went to God with bleeding hearts for sinne, but God had bleeding and mournfull affections

affections for their soules : wee can no sooner turne and weepe for our misdemeanours, but the Lord will turne towards us, come to meet us, meeting us embrace us, and embracing us weepe over us; our sorrow is his satisfaction, and our amendment is his rejoycing, *Luk. 15. 7.* had not the Princes of the people of Israel forsaken the Lord, he had not left thē in the hands of the Enemy : but how sped they, when they humbled themselves, and said, *the Lord is righteous* : did not the Lord presently say, he would not destroy them, hee would grant them some deliverance, and not powre out his wrath upon Hierusalem? *2 Chron. 12. 6, 7.* Againe was not the estate of *Judah* pitifull, when for a long time together, shee was without the true God, without a watching priest, and without the law ? and was not her condition just demerits of their wicked workes ? yet .so soone as they gathered themselves together, entred into covenant to seeke the Lord, decreed that whosoever would not seeke him, should be put

put to death, small or great, male or female, and had confirmed this her covenant; former experience of mercy may put Israel upon expectation of mercy, of future favour; and Gods gracious dealing with others upon their repenting, may put us in hope of compassion upon our returning. I.

I. Beloved, here's encouragement for us now to retire our selves, to stop out the wayes of sinne, and to turne our rejoycing in sinne into mourning for sinne. Its true, we have gone farre in the pathes of wickednesse, but our now repenting will, as it were, make amends for our precedent revolting; our sinnes are as crimson, they are of a skarlet die, yet if wee now cease to doe evil, they shall be as white as snow, and God and wee shall be so conjoyned in affection, as that each with other shall have a sweete communion: compassion, not indignation shall be our portion, not captivity, but liberty shal be the lot of our inheritance; our day shall be not turned to darknesse, but our darknesse into

*Nunguam Deus
spem perituro-
rum, si ei facere,
& simpliciter of-
feratur: nisi ad
summum quis per-
ueniat malorum,
& inde tamen vo-
lens reverti ad vir-
tutis viam, susci-
piat libenter, &
amplectitur.
Chrysost. de re-
parat. lap.*

into light: our enemies shall not in-
sult over us; they shall be troden
downe as dirt and mire in the streets:
for the Lord is so pitifull, and of
such tender mercies, *Iam. 5. 11.* that
the sinfullest Nations have received
acceptance, bringing their peni-
tentiall teares for a simple and sin-
cere sacrifice, which have all provo-
ked him, wee have all need to seeke
to appease him, therefore let us (ha-
ving beene wicked) forsake our
way, and (having beene unright-
eous) renounce our thoughts,
and returne unto the Lord that hee
may have mercy upon us, and to
our God that hee may forgive, *Isa^y
55. 7.*

Are not the sins of this people in
this Kingdome? have we not play-
ed the harlot, renounced our first
love? most of us followed the cu-
stomes and fashions of strangers,
and many of us committed grosse
idolatrie before the Lord, *Ier. 20.
25, 27.* Have we not, nay do wee
not yet in many places of this
Land, buy and sell with the men of
Tyre upon the Sabbath, the Lords
day,

day, the day to be sanctified, the
chiefe day of Market, and Mer-
chandize for our soules? *Neb. 13.*
15, 16. Doe we not bend our
tongues like our bowes for lyes? Do
not brothers supplant, and neigh-
bours walke with slanders in every
place? *Ier. 9. 3, 4.* Hath there not
beene of late tumults raised a-
mongst us? and have we not taken
crafty counsell against the Lords
people, yea, consulted against his
hidden ones: to this have we not
added; Come, let us cut them off
from being a Nation, that the name
of *Israel* may be no more in remem-
brance? *Psal. 83. 3, 4.* I wish I could
not say, that we steale, murther, com-
mit adultery, and sweare falsely, and
come and stand before the Lord in
his house, and say, VVe are delivered
to doe all these abominations, *Ier.*
7. 9, 10. These, these are our impi-
eties, as well as *Israels*: therefore re-
pent, O *England*, lest God make
thee an astonishment, and a hissing
unto other Nations: thy wounds
are festered and corrupted, it is time
for thee to seeke for a Chirurgion;
none

none but God can cure thee, he onely hath the Balme for healing spirituall ulcers; be not afraid to unbare thy sores, if thou wilt but unwrappe them, he will not refuse to lay a soveraigne plaister upon them: Behold he stands ready with the salve in his hand, if thou be not wanting to thy selfe, he is willing to doe thee good; he renders mercy, if thou wilt but fetch it: all that he requires at thy hands, is onely to repent thee of these, and all other thy horrid and hellish finnes. Do not say, it is now too late, because God threatens thee, as he now bids thee to returne from thy evill, so even now he promisseth to repent of the evill that he said he would doe unto thee. I will cease to reade any further at this time in this duty of repentance, there hath of late come forth many worthy and pious Treatises upon this sweet and soule-saving subject.

Debet prius penitentia damnare peccatum, ut gratia peccatis aboleretur.
Ambros.

Ver.

Verse 9. *At what instant I shall say concerning a Nation, and concerning a Kingdome, to build, and to plant it.*

IN these words you have an implicite promise; the subject matter wherof, is the re-building of tottering and decayed Nations, with the re-planting of wast and infertill Kingdomes.

Whole Nations, and whole Kingdomes are builded and plantied by the Lord.

Through sinne godly Kingdomes become like ruinous houses, and fruitfull Nations like barren soyles: man may thinke, when they are so, by his strength, wit, or policy to repaire them, but it is the Lord, and the Lord onely that re-builds the one, and replants the other. All things stand in neede of God, both those things that are strong, and those that are in a decaying condition; the strong, that they may be preserved, and the weake, that they may be strengthened: for the safety of every creature, yea of whole Kingdomes, is from the Lord, *Prov. 21. 31.*

*Omnia indigent
Domino, &
misera & sa-
licia: quia sine illo
nisi non suble-
vatur, & felix non
regitur. Aug.*

Ashur

Ashur cannot save *Israel*, neither can he riding upon horses advantage her when the Enemy is a comming upon her from captivity approaching neare unto her. If hills and mountaines could have kept off an adversary, *Hierusalem* had never fallen into such grievous misery, *Ier.* 3. 23. Their Land of *Iudah* was full of silver and gold, yea, so full, as that there was no end of her treasures, but this could not keepe her buildings; shee was full of horses, and there was no end of her chariots, but these could not free her from breaches: She had plenty of foode, and yearly provision, yet this could not exempt her from famine: She had men for strength like Gyants, expert in warlike affaires: She wanted neither Judge, Prophet, Prudent, nor Ancient; she had Counsellors, Cunning Artificers, & eloquent Orators; yet all these could not as so many props uphold her: for as greatness, power, glory, victory, and majestie is the Lords; and as either honors come from him: so in his hand onely is might to make great, and

and to give strength to all, 1 Chron. 29. 11, 12. he is the Architect to build up our wast places, and to make up our delapidations, he is the Gardener, to plucke up the thornes, and to set downe profitable trees in the soyle of our Nation.

I From hence we see whither, and to whom to goe for succour: even now our Common wealth lies groaning under the burden of unjust exactions, and our Church lies bleeding, being sore wounded with forraine, Romish, and superstitious Innovations; it is no resting upon outward priviledges, for woe to *Ariel* the city where *David* dwelt, God will distresse *Ariel*, hee will lay siege against her, and bring her downe, *Esay* 29. 1. It is no trusting to the helpe of forraine Nations, our eyes may faile with looking for vaine helpe, whilst in watching, we watch for a Nation that cannot save us, *Lam.* 4. 17. It is no relying upon our amunition; for *Judah* looked to the armour of the house of the Forrest, she fortified the wall of *Ierusalem*, and made a ditch betweene the

two walls, but looked not to God, *Esay 22. 8. 9. 10. 11.* But what said the Lord, *Surely this iniquitie shall not be purged from you till you dye, Esay 22.*

14. A defenced Kingdome may become desolate, for he can turne backe the weapons of warre that are in our hands wherewith we fight against our Enemies, and bring our Adversaries into the streetes of our Cities, *Ier. 21. 4.* Doubtlesse it is the best then to have recourse to, and to trust in the name of the God of *Iacob*, who is a shield to his Land, and a defence unto his people; hee is a God All-sufficient, we cannot be in so desperate a condition, but he is able to command deliverance for us: It is true, distractions are amongst us, and discouragements doe dayly flow in upon us, but yet he can create comforts, he can dispell the clouds; yea out of the ashes of dying comforts; nay, which is somewhat more, out of our greatest dismayings, he can raise up comforts to our drooping soules. Did he not make the Whale that swallowed up *Jonah* a means to bring him to the shore?

shore? Did he not make the raging sea a wall on both sides to the children of *Israel*? those troubles which we apprehend will prove devouring waves to our flourishing estate, he can turne to be meanes to bring us to our haven, to settle our peace, and to give us rest: So mighty is God in power, and so excellent in his workings, *Esay* 28. 29. Beloved, our Kingdome is in distresse, and the adverse power is very strong: let us now flee unto the Lord, as *Iehosaphat* and his people did when they were invironed with the children of *Ammon*, *Moab*, and mount *Seir*, saying, Behold, how they reward us, to come to cast us out of our possessions which thou hast given us to inherit; O our God, wilt thou not judge men? we have no might against this great company, that cometh against us, neither know we what to doe, but our eyes are upon thee, *2 Chron.* 20. 11, 12. Are not the waters of *Beisbel* growne muddy? have not the wicked trampled them with their feete? doe they not pollute that Sanctuary, and say, Come let us take the house of God into

our possession; O let us as for many Davids cry mightily unto the Lord, saying, *Doe good in thy good pleasure unto Sion, and build up the walls of Hierusalem*; O let us thus pray with devout hearts upon our God, for as never any that trusted in him was deceived; so if we beleieve in the Lord, we shall be established, *2 Chro. 20. 20.* In his due time he will plant us and build us againe.

Quest.

What doth the Lord doe when he builds, and when he plants?

Answ.

First, man when he comes to a place where no house hath beene erected, surveyeth his ground, considereth his charge, provideth his materialls, and contriveth them according to the building that hee doth intend. God comming to a people that were not his people, and purposing that they shall be called his chosen ones, thinkes himselfe how it may be accomplished, for God, saith *Paul*, was in Christ reconciling the world unto himselfe; having contrived it, he hewes the stones, and squares the timber, working both to will and to doe, according

Whar God doth
when he builds.

according to his good pleasure; having thus framed it, he sets it up, and this is his perfecting of his Saints, for he layes stone upon stone, joyns one piece of timber to another, and addes grace to grace, untill they become perfect in Christ Iesus: these are Gods buildings, *1 Corinb. 3.9.* So for Kingdomes, hee first views them, and afterwards according to the precedent Observation builds up the waste places of them; but if he come to a Nation that is onely envious, he takes but away the rotten timber, & throwes downe the rubbish, putting in that which is sound, and strong in the roome, thereof; thus doing, hee keepe up, and rebuilds his edifice; one rotten eaten, and decaied peece of wood may come to endanger the whole house.

God like a skilfull workeman searcheth, post after post, untill such time, as he have searched every post; and looke where he findes a rotten post, he knockes it downe and sets up another in the room thereof. Base and treacherous spi-

rits to his truth must be cut downe with the axe of Justice, and men of sincere hearts, faithfull to the State, and of excellent spirits for the Church, must be advanced, when he repaires the breach of our Kingdome, and restores the pathes to dwell in: there is not cricke nor flaw in a Nation but he beholds it, for all things are naked before him, *Heb. 4. 13.* there is not decaies, but as he hath materially, so he can place them to the best advantage according to his owne minde; another cannot come after him to mend his worke: he must needs build wisely, for he is wisdom it selfe: he builds freely, his mercy moveth him, it pities him to see you scattered and dispersed stones of his own *H. erusalem*, none can interrupt him, no power can withstand him: If *Haman* goe about to hinder the advancement and prosperous estates of the *Iemes*, thinking to prevent it by bidding large monyes for their lives, and by getting the King to seale his Commission for the day of their slaughter; yet all this cannot hinder
Gods

Gods keeping them up; no, he will send *Hammon* their enemye, *Haman* their proud and malicious Adversarie with shame to the gallows, rather than this bleeding, this dying; falling people shall not yet stand, and live peaceably before him: Thus our God, as *David* saith, doth whatsoever he will.

Psal. 115. 3.

What God doth
when he plants.

2 When man plants, there is either an utter vanity, or else a decay: wee cannot say that the Lord hath found this Kingdome altogether empty of them that desire to feare his Name: we may speake it to his praise, there is yet amongst us many thousands, who have not bowed the knee to *Baal*. Therefore God in re-planting, will but repaire: now first, when men plant, they stubbe up the old and unprofitable trees; and shall not God when hee brings up a Vine from *Egypt*, cast out the Heathen before he plant it? *Psal. 30. 8.* It is the depression of the wicked, that is, the rejoycing of the righteous, and the extirpation of the old rootes, that makes way for the new plants. Secondly, the Gar-

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denet gathers his plants together, he fetcheth them, it may be from many places, and having set them in order, he waters them that they may grow, and under-props them, that the winde can not beate them downe: so the Lord in Nationall plantations; first, gathers his Plants, his people from all quarters, *Rom. 9. 24, 25, 26.* secondly, having gathered them, he planteth them; hence hee saith, *I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their owne, and move no more, neither shall the children of wickednesse afflict them any more, as before time, 2 Sam. 7. 10.* Thirdly, having planted them, hee waters them, causing the dew, or the raine of his sacred Gospel to fall and distill upon them; the Ministry of his Word, is that River, whose streames make glad the city of God, *Psal. 46. 4.* Lastly, he upholds them, stormes and tempests of opposition and persecution can never teare them, and plucke them up by the rootes, for he is a hiding place from the winde, and

The felicity of
those Nations,
Kingdomes, that
are builded by
God.

and a covert from the tempest, as rivers of waters in a drie place, and as the shadow of a great rocke in a weary Land, *Esay* 32.2. O happy Nation, yea, thrice happy Kingdome, that is builded and planted by the Lord! First, there is a happy union in Gods building: one stone doth not hang over another; there is no stirring from the frame, one piece of timber doth not lye this way, and another that way, there is a comely concurrence, and a sweet agreement in all parts thereof, *Hierusalem* is as a city that is at unity, or compact together, *Psal.* 122.3. The Lord once close up our rents, and make us all of one heart, and one minde, and so build us together, that we may be a habitation fit for himself, *Eph.* 2.22. Secondly, man builds now, and within a little while it falls to the ground; but in Gods building, there is a perpetuity; the devill and wicked men may seeke to under-mine it, their plots and paines are altogether vaine, for the house that is erected by God continues for ever, 2 *Sam.* 7.27. Againe

gaine, where God plants Nations, they are like fertill Orchards, they bud through the sent of waters, and spread forth their boughes like plants, *Iob 14. 9.* For the trees of the Lord are full of Sappe, the Cedars of *Lebanon* which he hath planted, *Psal. 104. 16.* Secondly, Gods Plantation resembles a pleasant Garden, they blossome like the Palme tree, and flourish in the courts of their God, *Psal. 92. 13, 14.* The tents of *Jacob* are goodly, and so are the Tabernacles of *Israel*, as the Valley are they spread forth, as the Gardens by the rivers side, *Num. 24. 5, 6.* O beloved, who is there apprehending these priviledges now that would not have God to plant, and to build this Kingdome? therefore all you that wish well to *Sion*, pray for *Hierusalem*, desire the Lord to re-build, and re-plant, this tottering, this sinfull Nation.

Quest.

But how must we be qualified, that we may expect a re-building, and a replantation from the Lord?

Ans^r.

First, as the soule must be sensible

ble of its owne emptinesse of grace, or at least of its decayes in grace, before it can expect a replenishing, or a reparation from the Lord; So we should be apprehensive of the vacuity, at least the enemies in the Church and commonwealth, Where is Justice executed? where are whoremongers, drunkards and swearers, punished? where is the powerfull Ministry of the Word obeyed, and the professors thereof encouraged? Untill we be sensible and deeply affected with these things, we shall never be planted by the Lord, for it is in the wilderness that God plants the Cedar, the Shittah tree, and the Myrtle. The whole need not the Physitian; strong, and delectable houses call not for the Architect; pleasant, and fruitfull Orchards neede not a re-plantation. Secondly, as we must be sorrowfull for all our sinnes, so more particularly for that we have beene secure, sleeping, not watching, when the enemy came to cast in his tares, and that we have beene cowardly, rather fearefull and yeelding, then with-

Esay 41. 19.

withstanding the enemies of the truth; O let our eyes droppe teares for these things; for they that mourne in *Sion*, shall be called trees of righteousness, trees of the Lords owne plantation, *Esay* 61.3. Thirdly, we must now at the last labour to be pious, yea fulgent, and splendent in holinesse, for as righteousness delivereth a Nation, *Prov.* 14. 34. So if the people become so forward in the Kingdome of *Iudah*, that they stirre up one another to holy duties, and say, Come ye, let us goe unto the mountaine of the Lord, to the house of the God of *Iacob*, for he will teach us his wayes, and we will walke in his paths, then God will judge among the Nations, and so rebuke the people for their sakes, that they shall beate their Swords into Plow-shares, and their Speares into Pruning-hookes, &c. *Esay* 2.3,4. Fourthly, we must be sincere, aiming at Gods glory, thirsting ten thousand times more after it than our owne prosperity, in performance of religious actions; and to this we must adde faith with a holy depen-

dependency upon God: For blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, whose hope the Lord is, he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, that spreadeth out her roote by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but his leafe shall be greene, he shall not be carefull in the yeare of drought, neither shall cease from yeelding fruit, *Ier. 17. 7, 8.* Lastly, we must resolve to be constant, and not plant her, but plucke her up, *Ier. 42. 10.* Oh that we of this Nation, were thus qualified, then we might repaire, yea beleeve that he would re-build, and re-plant us in our owne Land.

But how shall we know God intends to build, and to plant a Kingdom?

Quest.

First, Divisions presage ruines: when the timber flies from the joynts, and the walls fall from the wood, the house will not stand long.

Answ.

A Nation cannot subsist that is divided against it selfe; If God begin once to bring our hearts as living stones, and lay this to either making us of the same minde, speaking and doing

doing one, and the selfe-same thing, then it is a signe that he will build us, not plucke us downe, for we must be builded together to be the house of God, *Ephe. 2.22.* Secondly, when rulers become religious, and Princes become pillars to uphold, maintaine, and encourage holinesse, then God is about to build. If *Asa* takeaway the Altars, breake downe his Images, cut downe the groves, and command the people to seeke the Lord God of their fathers, then *Judah* shall be ridde of her warres, God will give her rest, and not ruine her by the sword, *2 Chron. 14.3,4,5,6.* *Iehoshaphat* shall not seeke the Lord God of his fathers, walking in his Commandments, refusing the doings of *Israel*, but his Kingdome shall be established; All *Judah* shall then bring him presents; he shall then have riches, and honour in abundance, *2 Chron. 17.3,4,5,11.* It is by judgement that Kings establish their Lands, *Pro. 29.4.* And by countenancing, and advancing holinesse, that they become Nursing Fathers, and Nursing

ling Mothers to the Church, *Esay* 49.23. Thirdly, when mens hearts grow so soft, that they feare him for his mercies, and tremble at the least expressions of his anger, the comminations of his judgements, then God intends to erect an edifice amongst them; for the Lord doth bind up *Hierusalem*, and gather together the out-casts of *Israel*, he healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up all their wounds, *Psal.* 157, 2, 3. Lastly, when Nations grow better, and become more holy by light afflictions, it is a forerunner of mercy, it is a signe that God will not extirpare them, nor destroy them. If *Iudah* learne, and by her Captivity in *Chaldea*; God will build her up, not pull her downe, plant her, and not plucke her up, *Ier.* 24.5, 6. The hearing of stones denotes a building at hand; & the budding or springing of Plants, that they are not dead but shall be preserved; therefore let us returne to the Almighty, that we may be built up, and pull away iniquity farre from our tabernacles, that we may lay

lay up gold as dust, and the gold of Ophir, as the stones of the brookes, *Iob 22.23, 24.*

That as God doth suddenly promise to build up Kingdomes, so he doth as suddenly plant or re-plant whole Nations.

After stormes come faire weather, smiles are subsequents to threats, thunder-claps doe but cleare the aire; Gods menaces make but way for his mercies; for if upon the voyce of commination, the heart of man begin to mourne and to bleede for sinne, God forthwith pitties him, and pittying him, causeth the light of his countenance to shine upon him: At what instant I shall say, &c. God promiseth before he performe, to set faith on worke, and to put our soules upon prayer; having promised, he doth performe to shew his faithfulness; and as he promiseth suddenly, so he doth performe upon an instant, to revive our weake, our dying, and decaying spirits: where faith layes hold, and prayer pulls, the blessing is not long absent; sorrow

may be over-night, but joy, like a bright Sunne, will breake forth in the morning; *Iudah* is almost ruined before the Lord beginne to build her, almost supplanted, before he sets upon the planting of her: our deepest distresses are our fittest occasions for the triall of our friends. For a friend, saith *Salomon*, is borne for the day of adversity. God is a fast friend to his people, he may seeme strange unto them for a while, for the triall of their love, its for a moment in his anger, when they have grieved him by their sins, he hides himselfe from them; but if he once see, that they rest on his mercy, resting, supplicates his Majestie, and supplicating, come with watery eyes, and bedewed cheekes for their offences, he doth but frowne upon them, or send them away with an abnegation, but seeing their misery, observing their afflictions, and beholding their soules at a dead list, he stretcheth out his arme, and puts out his hand, the arme of his mercie, and the hand of his power for to relieve them: the Lord many times

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will

will not be seene but in the mount:
The Churches Extremity, is his
Opportunity:his people are as dried
bones, their hope is lost, and in
their captivity, they apprehend
themselves cut off for ever; and
then, and never before he puts his
Spirit into them, and bids them live,
then he opens the graves, calls them
forth, and brings them into the Land
of *Israel*, *Ezek.* 37. 11, 12, 14. A
Nation may be at a low ebbe, it may
rotter, and shake againe before it be
delivered by the Lord; but when
the wicked once come, with the joy
at their heart to appoint it for their
possession, and with dispitfull
minds to cast it out for a prey; if
that Nation but turne from their
evill, God will then say to it, as hee
said to the mountaines of *Israel*:
Spread forth your branches, yeeld
your fruit, I am for you, I will turne
unto you, your Land shall be tilled,
you shall enjoy peace, and sit down
in quiet, *Ezek.* 36. 5, 8, 9. And this
God will doe at an instant, even at
that instant, when all hope seemes
to be past for a future deliverance.

Are

Are not great workes suddenly performed symptomes of great abilities? Sudden Acts of Gods providence make his glory the more splendent, and his power the more apparent: Hence it was persued by the rage of *Pharaoh*, having her adversary behind her threatening to slay her, & the sea before her threatening to drowne her; then *Moses* seeing God, in her straight, ready to bring deliverance to her, charged her to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, *Exod. 14. 13.* &c. for indeede God saved them for his name sake, that he might make his mighty power to be knowne, *Psal. 106. 8.* As her freedome from danger was very sudden, so because it was sudden, it was the more welcome, it cheer'd her heart, put life into her spirits, and made her sing with alacritie the praise of *Iehovah*, *Exo. 15. 1, 2,* &c. Perplexity sweetens mercy, great troubles give a good relish unto sudden favours, a pardon is more welcome to a malefactor at the place of Execution, than it would have beene, had it beene

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brought before his Arraignment.

Let us not dispaire of the re-building, and re-plantation of our Kingdome. It is true in regard of diuisions in the Church, and distractions in the Common-wealth, and in respect of aduersaries abroad, and treacherous enemies at home, the case may seeme desperate; yet beloved, hope well, lift up your heads, our wounds are not yet incurable, if we seeke the Lord: he hath power enough to helpe us, he doth but defer to try our dependencie, he doth but delay to sharpen, & quicken our prayers; could he but once see us all upon our knees, seeking his face, and powring out our soules, he would quickly step in, and stepping in, effect our deliverance, we see him not now, he will come, whensoever he comes, he will be welcome, but its likly he wil come suddely, even then when we look not for him.

Thinke not that he hath wholly cast us off, he is but scouring us, he is but refining us; ere long, this Nation will be very glorious, hee will once againe be knowne in her, make

our

our Palaces a fitt refuge, & appoint
salvation for walls and bulwarkes to
this Kingdome. Why should
you thinke he would not purge his
Church? hath he not promised to
bring health at once unto it, to cure
it, and to reveale unto it abundance
of peace and truth? *Ier. 33. 6.* And
though ours have fallen foully by
the inticements of superstitious va-
nities, yet he will cleanse it from all
its iniquities, and forgive it all its
transgressions that it is guilty of, *Ier.*
33. 8. Doe not conceit that the ad-
verse powers shall ever prosper, we
shall be to the Lord a name of joy,
a praise and a honour before all the
Nations of the earth, and the enemy
shall feare and tremble for the gifts
and prosperity that he bestowes up-
on us, *Ier. 33. 9.* Stormes are bitter,
but as they are not of continuance,
so they end with calms, our troubles
may be sharpe, they will not be long,
wee shall bee all righteous, wee
shall inherit the Land, wee shall
be branches of his planting, the
worke of his hands, that he may be
glorified, *Esay 60. 21.* I hope hee

Isa. 60. 21.

hath not yet rejected our *Indah*,
 nay, I am perswaded, hee will be
 mercifull to the Land, and to his
 people: we thinke, because wee see
 him not he hath forsaken us, because
 all things doe not concur with our
 desires, that therefore there is no
 healing for us; must our times be
 Gods times? faith makes not hast,
 when we are fit for mercy, and God
 fit to bestow, we shall be sure to have
 it, he doth but waite, that he may be
 gracious, *Esay 30. 18.* and watch for
 a fit and opportune season to build
 us up, *Ier. 31. 3.* he can bestow bles-
 sings at any time, but because every
 thing is the best in its season, there-
 fore he will seasonably grant delive-
 rance, and because sudden favours
 have many times the best welcome,
 therefore it may be he will sudden-
 ly re-plant us, and re-build us. The
 Lord of his infinite mercy protect
 this Kingdome from the cruelty of
 inbred Vipers, and from the ty-
 ranny of forraigne Adversaries: and
 so build us, and plant us, that we may
 once become a peculiar people; zea-
 lous of good workes. *Amen.*

FINIS.

Ier. 31. 3.

